

**The role of the creative business incubator  
in the creative economy:**

**the Case of Thailand Creative & Design Center  
Between 2018 to 2019**



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# The role of the Creative Business Incubator in the Creative Economy: the case of Thailand Creative & Design Center Between 2018 to 2019

A Master's Thesis



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Global Markets Local Creativities

Semester 2, 2019/2020



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## **List of Abbreviations**

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CEA	Creative Economy Agency (Public Organization)
DCMS	Department of Culture, Media and Sport (UK)
DITP	Department of International Trade Promotion
DIP	Department of Intellectual Property
ITAP	Innovation and Technology Assistance Program
NESDB	National Economic and Social Development Board
NESDP	National Economic and Social Development Plan
NIA	National Innovation Agency (Public Organization)
NSTDA	National Science and Technology Development Agency
OKMD	Office of Knowledge Management and Development
TCDC	Thailand Creative & Design Center

## **Acknowledgements**

Writing a Thesis is a challenging process, especially when you have to write it under the ongoing global pandemic. I could not have accomplished this thesis without the guidance and support from both of my supervisors. First, Professor Ben Wubs, who has given me many valuable recommendations, time and time again, even when I was very lost and cried in his office from the very meeting. As well as Professor Montserrat Pareja Eastaway, who has helped me step back and see the bigger picture of my paper. I am very grateful for the support from both of them.

My grateful attitude also extended to Mr. Jirawat Tangkijngamwong, a successful businessman and university professor who has helped illustrate the landscape of the creative economy and point out the challenge that Thai entrepreneurs often face.

An exceptional thanks then to Miss. Imhathai Kanjina, the Managing Director of the TCDC Chiang Mai, who has inspired the improvement of the livelihoods of many communities in the Northern part of Thailand, through her work with the TCDC. And Mr. Phongsathorn Laiadon, D.R.I.V.E. 2018's project director. And I would also like to thank all of the businesses that allow me to gain insight into their industry after incubated by the TCDC.

A special thanks to Andy, Ana, Marisa, and James, who help me proofread my thesis.

Finally, thanks to all my friends and family, who have supported me through this tough time of doing a master's degree during the spread of the COVID-19.

Mint Sirada Sirijindaphan

28th June 2020

# Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter introduces the thesis topic, definitions of the relevant terms of use, presents research questions, and sub-questions, and the research methodologies, along with an explanation of how data was collected.

## 1.1 Introduction

‘Creativity, knowledge, and access to information are increasingly recognized as powerful engines driving economic growth and promoting development in a globalizing world.’<sup>1</sup> Since the 1990s, the term ‘creative industries’ was picked up by the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS) in the United Kingdom, the creative industries policy was perceived as a policy that contributes to the growth not only in the developed economy but also in the developing ones.<sup>2</sup> Since the early 1980s, the economic development of Thailand has been based on export-oriented, resource-based and labor-intensive industries.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, leading foreign investors to find benefit from the low cost in labor-intensive production and grow their interest in investing in Thailand.<sup>4</sup> However, this competitive advantage was not everlasting for Thailand as a player in the global economy.<sup>5</sup> To maintain the country’s competitive position in the global market in the mid-2000s, Thailand adopted the idea of the creative economy and moved towards a ‘Value Creation Economy.’<sup>6</sup>

In 2005, Thailand opened its first creative business incubator called the Thailand Creative & Design Center (TCDC). The TCDC positioned itself as a learning center or ‘intellectual entertainment,’ thereby inspiring and supporting its incubatees to create value-added products or services, with the end goal of increasing the country’s competitiveness. Business

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<sup>1</sup> UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Report 2008: The challenge of assessing the creative economy towards informed policy-making*, (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2008), 3

<sup>2</sup> UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Report 2008*

<sup>3</sup> Brimble, Peter, *Foreign Direct Investment: Performance and Attraction The Case of Thailand*, (Bangkok: International Monetary Fund, 2002), 9

<https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/seminar/2002/fdi/eng/pdf/brimble.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Charoenloet, Voravidh, ‘Thailand in the Regional Division of Labour,’ *Regionalization and Labour Market Interdependence in East and Southeast Asia*, (Palgrave Macmillan 1997): 199-223, 199.

<sup>5</sup> Nidhiprabha, Bhanupong, ‘The Rise and Fall of Thailand’s Export-Oriented Industries.’ *Asian Economic Papers* 16:3, (2017), 128-150,130

<sup>6</sup> Parivudhiphongs, Alongkorn, ‘Creative industries policy in Thailand’, *Routledge Handbook of Cultural and Creative Industries in Asia ed*, (Abingdon: Routledge, December 2018), 40.

TCDC, Annual Report 2006 (Bangkok, 2007)

incubators are often perceived as a tool for regional development.<sup>7</sup> TCDC organized numerous exhibitions, talks, and workshops throughout the years.<sup>8</sup> In the beginning, most of the users were creative industry professionals since the idea of the creative economy was very new in Thailand. However, the TCDC has evolved into the Creative Economy Agency (CEA), a public organization established in 2018. The TCDC under CEA began to open its door to wider audiences, especially for businesses with the mission to promote the creative economy as the main driver for sustainable growth.<sup>9</sup>

Meanwhile, how can a creative business incubator become a tool to support the growth of the creative economy in Thailand. This thesis will apply the ‘anatomy of the creative city’ framework to evaluate the role of TCDC in fostering the synergy between different sectors in the creative economy.<sup>10</sup> Since the connection between infrastructure and community cannot happen out of thin air. What was the role of a creative business incubator in supporting the creative economy in the case of TCDC between 2018 to 2019? This thesis also aimed to provide a broader evaluation of the impact of TCDC on its incubatees. Multiple case studies from the incubatees that participated in the TCDC incubation project within the past two years will be incorporated.

## 1.2 Definitions

This section presents the definitions of the concepts that are relevant for this thesis.

### Creative economy:

In the 2008 Creative Economy Report, UNCTAD defined the creative economy as ‘an evolving concept based on creative assets potentially generating economic growth and development. While the office of the National Economic and Social Development Council of Thailand defined this sector as

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<sup>7</sup> Hannon, Paul D, and Paul Chaplin, ‘Are incubators good for business? Understanding incubation practice the challenges for policy,’ *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* Vol.21 (2003): 861-881, 861.

<sup>8</sup> ‘About us,’ TCDC, accessed November 29, 2019, <https://web.tcdc.or.th/en/aboutus>.

<sup>9</sup> TCDC, ‘About us.’

<sup>10</sup> Patrick Cohendet, David Grandadam, and Laurent Simon, ‘The Anatomy of the Creative City,’ *Industry and Innovation*, 17:1, (2010): 91-111, 92.

*'an economic system that mixes cultural assets, local wisdom, and the uniqueness of Thai with proper knowledge and technology in order to produce unique and diverse products and services. In this way, intrinsic economic value will be added. It will create jobs, generate revenue, and boost competitiveness which will enhance the quality of life.'*<sup>11</sup>

Hence, it will turn cover the entire creativity-driven economy in Thailand.

#### Creative business incubator:

It is always challenging for new firms to survive in the first few years. Lacking know-how during the start-up phase often leads to business failure. A business incubator can be interpreted as needed as a shortcut to help foster entrepreneurs to strive, stimulate new business creation, and sustainable business growth.<sup>12</sup> Business incubators are

*'organizations that support the establishment and growth of new businesses with tangible (e.g. space, shared equipment and administrative services) and intangible (e.g. knowledge, network access) resources during a flexible period and are funded by a sponsor (e.g. government or corporation) and/or fund themselves taking rent (or less frequently equity) from incubatees.'*<sup>13</sup>

Moreover, a creative business incubators have distinct characteristic from other business incubators, since the creative industry is founded on 'individuals with creative talent, combined with managers of economic and technologic resources, producing saleable products whose economic value is based on their 'cultural' or 'intellectual' properties.'<sup>14</sup> The business support program needs to be able to help lay the needed foundation of both business and design.

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<sup>11</sup> John Howkins, 'Developing Thailand's Creative Economy' *Thailand's National Strategy on Creative Economy*, Bangkok: Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), (Bangkok, 2010), 20.

<sup>12</sup> Hausberg, J.P., and S Korreck, 'Business incubators and accelerators: a co-citation analysis-based, systematic literature review,' *J Technol Transf* 45 (2020): 151-176.

<sup>13</sup> Hausberg, J.P., and S Korreck, 'Business incubators and accelerators: a co-citation analysis-based, systematic literature review,' *J Technol Transf* 45 (2020): 151-176.

<sup>14</sup> Pinho, 'Creative business entrepreneurship,' 371.

### 1.3 Research questions

#### The main research questions

*What is the role of a creative business incubator in supporting the creative economy?*

Many Thai researchers recognize that the establishing of the TCDC has marked an important step towards reinforcing the creative industry policy in Thailand.<sup>15</sup> The TCDC has been seen as a vital force in supporting and foster development of the creative economy. However, what has been the role of this creative business incubator? The research around the interaction of the cultural infrastructure as part of the cultural development especially in Thailand is something that has been missing from the academic debates.<sup>16</sup> With the increasing interest business incubators as a tools for local and regional development, it is necessary to understand their position.

#### Sub-questions

- What is the historical evolution of the Thai economy?
- Why does Thailand need a new economic spearhead?
- What is considered a creative economy in Thailand?
- What has TCDC, as a creative business incubator has done to help their incubatees enhance their businesses?
- To what extent does TCDC depend on political will?
- What is the creative industries discourse in Bangkok?
- What is the impact of the TCDC a creative business incubator on its incubatees?

This research will provide a general idea of the historical background of the creative industry, creative economy, and development of creative business incubators in Chapter 2 to 4, while also poses some questions on the matter of the creative industry in Thailand. Chapter 4 will focus on the supply side of the incubator, from the historical development of the TCDC to the three-value preposition of an incubator, and then the role of the TCDC on supporting creative economy. On Chapter 5, the demand side, explores case studies of incubatees and the creative industries discourse in Bangkok. Lastly, on Chapter 5 will be the conclusion of this thesis.

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<sup>15</sup> Parivudhiphongs ‘Creative industries policy in Thailand,’ 32. Sermcheep, el at., ‘A Comparative Analysis’ 55.

<sup>16</sup> Roberta Comunian, ‘Rethinking the Creative City: The Role of Complexity, Networks and Interactions in the Urban Creative Economy,’ *Urban Studies* 48(6), (2010): 1157 -1179, 1173.

## 1.4 Methodology

The empirical part of this thesis is based on analysis of the TCDC, a creative business incubator in Thailand, by focusing on their Bangkok and Chiang Mai branches. An exploratory approach was used with the objective of describing the role of business incubators in supporting their incubatees as well as to show the impact on incubatees' business development. As part of the investigation, qualitative research seems to be a suitable option to gain rich data with its ability to capture diverse perspective.<sup>17</sup> Given the attempt to assess the impact of a creative business incubator on the incubatees' business, semi-structured interviews were chosen as a means of collecting primary data. Program reports were used to help build case studies, along with other sources such as annual reports, press releases, and online archives. Mixed-methods research is applied here in order to gain stronger evidence.<sup>18</sup> The assessment of SMEs in the creative economy was based on a semi-structure interview with seven businesses that incubated by the TCDC in the past two years in 2018-2019.

### 1.4.1 Data Collection

The data collection will explore both the supply and demand sides of the incubator. Firstly, this thesis was looking at the incubator as the supplier of business incubation. By identifying the general characteristic of the TCDC, including the development and the business model of the institution. In order to understand how the TCDC help its incubatees to apply innovation and creativity to enhance their products or services, the framework of Bruneel et al., on the three-value proposition of an incubator will be used to observe this institution.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, to identify the role of the TCDC in foster the synergy between different sectors in the creative city the 'anatomy of the creative city' framework by to evaluate TCDC position.<sup>20</sup>

The first primary data came from interview with the key staff of the TCDC, including the Managing Director of the TCDC Chiang Mai, and Project Director of D.R.I.V.E 2018. The aim of the interviews was to uncover the TCDC's vision and mission, and which steps this incubator had to take to achieve it. In addition, it aimed to gain insight into the creative

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<sup>17</sup> Robert Yin, *Qualitative Research from start to finish*, (New York: The Guilford Press, 2011): 8.

<sup>18</sup> Yin, *Case Study Research*, 100.

<sup>19</sup> Bruneel, et al., 'The Evolution of Business Incubators' 110.

<sup>20</sup> Cohendet, Grandadam, and Simon, 'The Anatomy of the Creative City,' 92.

economy in Thailand. The reason that these interviews were conducted in a semi-structured way was due to the flexibility of this style. If the answers became complex or highlighted some interesting aspects, it was possible to move into the new topic as well as gain some more clarification on their answers.<sup>21</sup> These semi-structured interviews were conducted in Thai over the phone, around 30 to 50 min in duration. The interviews were organized between March - April 2020 under the governmental lock down in Thailand due to the novel coronavirus which caused limited access to more managers from the TCDC. Later, the audio records were transcribed in Thai and the relevant points were translated into English.

The second stage was the collection of data from the demand side. The objective of this study is to understand the impact on SMEs, startup, and entrepreneurs who will all be called incubatees in this thesis. This step followed the adjusted version of Voisey et al.'s framework to measure the business development outcomes of incubatees in 'hard measures' and 'soft measures.'<sup>22</sup> Seven semi-structured interviews were conducted with incubatees who participated in an incubation projects over the past two years. In order to complement the data gained from these interviews, information was gathered from relevant company brochures and internet pages for use in the case study analysis. The case study samples selection of the demand side of the TCDC was also guided by the limited response of companies. Hence the data collection process was done during the lockdown due to the spread of COVID-19 in March 2020.

#### **1.4.2 Multiple-case study exploratory approach**

There are various types of qualitative research but the one that fits with this context is a case study approach, which studies social phenomenon in its real-world context.<sup>23</sup> Case study is one of the ways to answer broad research questions, providing insight on how a process develops.<sup>24</sup> Case studies can also have strengths in gaining an insider's viewpoint that

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<sup>21</sup> Louise Barriball and Alison While, 'Collecting data using a semi-structured interview: a discussion paper,' *Journal of Advanced Nursing* (1994): 328-335, 330.

<sup>22</sup> Voisey Pam, Lynne Gornall, Paul Jones, and Brychan Thomas. 'The measurement of success in a business incubation project,' *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development* Vol. 13 No. 3, (2006):454-468, 465.

<sup>23</sup> Yin, *Qualitative Research*, 17.

<sup>24</sup> Peter Swanborn, 'What is a Case Study?' In In: *Case Study Research: What, Why and How?*, SAGE Publications, (2010): 1-23. 4.

could help build a more holistic picture of the research objective.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, case study is a methodology that has strength in dealing with variety of evidences, including documents, artifacts, interviews, and direct observations, putting all of this evidences together and telling some stories about it.<sup>26</sup> This means that the collected data cannot be statistically analyzed, but would come out in the form of multiple case studies analysis. The exploratory case study would help to display an insight into the impact of an institution on its incubatees, which is still incomplete in this field, especially in Thailand.

Three case studies were chosen to represent TCDC incubatees for several reasons, including the various starting points, industry, stage of the firms, and the aftereffect. These three case studies have a unique starting point and came from different industries. The last reason was that the incubation results are very different among the three cases. One of which was still stuck in the prototype phase, while it could shed some light on the challenges of sustaining a business in the creative economy. On the other hand, the other two, had launched their product in the major retail store. Multiple cases were applied to measure the result of each firm after an incubation program with TCDC. A multiple case was preferred over a single one, since more information could help strengthen the result of the study.<sup>27</sup> A detailed analysis of role of the supply side of the TCDC as incubator can be found on Chapter 5, while the outcome impact of incubatees, the demand side, will be presented on Chapter 6.

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<sup>25</sup> Mills, Albert J., Gabrielle Durepos, and Elden Wiebe *Encyclopedia of Case Study Research*, (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2010)

<sup>26</sup> Robert Yin, *Case Study Research and Applications Sixth Edition*, (London: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2018): 43.

<sup>27</sup> Yin, *Case Study*, 98.

## Chapter 2: Evolution of creative industry

In this chapter, the relevant literature regarding the scope of this research will be discussed. The discussion will begin with the historical evolution of the creative industry concept to illustrate the theoretical background of this industry. Subsequently, we will discuss the creative industry in Asia, academic discussion of which has been said to be defined by notable silence. The discussion will also touch upon the impact of policy recommendations on the creative economy from UNCTAD/ UNESCO on Thailand. The second part of this chapter will review the ecosystem of the creative business incubators and the value of this type of institution. Lastly, the discussion will be on the role of a creative business incubators in a creative city context.

### 2.1 The historical evolution of the creative industry

The concept of cultural industries is a fluid idea that draws from diverse origins. However, most of the sources in the academic debate in this field often circulate from within the Euro-American literature. In 1947, the term ‘cultural industries’ was first mentioned together by Theodor Adorno and his colleague Max Horkheimer in the essay ‘The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception.’<sup>28</sup> Both Adorno and Horkheimer wrote about the commercialization of art and culture, such as film, newspapers, jazz, and popular music, however, the technical ability to mass communicate that came up from the creative industry turned out to be a propaganda instrument.<sup>29</sup> During this time, the perception towards cultural and creative industries was very negative because radio news and advertisements on television were used as propaganda tools during World War II in the United States.<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless, the loathing towards the cultural and creative industry did not last long when people began to notice the possible of economic benefits that this industry could bring.

In the void of the post-war period in the United Kingdom in the 1980s, famine push Margaret Thatcher, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, to seek for an alternative solution to save the economy, creative economy was put in the spotlight. While the volume

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<sup>28</sup> O’Connor, Justin, ‘The cultural and creative industries : a literature review 2nd ed,’ (London: Creativity, Culture and Education, 2010): 11.

<sup>29</sup> O’Connor, ‘The cultural and creative,’ 11, 18.

<sup>30</sup> Horten Gerd, ‘Radio Goes to War: The Cultural Politics of Propaganda During World War II,’ (Berkeley, California, University of California Press 2003)

manufacturing export in the U.K. fall dramatically.<sup>31</sup> John Myerscough, along with the art sector, began to develop an argument about the economic benefits of the creative industry.<sup>32</sup> Later, Myerscough came up with the ‘multiplier effect,’ a model that could measure direct and indirect income generated by arts organizations and activities, and how the creative industry could help increasing employment rate and local spending.<sup>33</sup> Soon, these arguments helped support the implementation of arts and cultural policies in the U.K.

The broader exposure for ‘cultural policy’ happened after introducing the new name ‘creative industries.’<sup>34</sup> This change happened as a result of the British Labor government lead by Tony Blair, who established a Creative Industries Task Force (CITF) as the main activity of the new Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in 1997.<sup>35</sup> This change opened up more opportunities for the cultural industries beyond the arts and attracted policymakers from all over the world. The DCMS defined this industry as that which has its ‘origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property.’<sup>36</sup> As a result of implementation of the creative economy policies created almost a million jobs and earned as much as £7.5bn export or around 4 percent of GDP.<sup>37</sup> The success in increasing the economic impact has helped increase credibility as well as generating more public interest on the topic. While not all academia agree on the approach to measuring the success of the UK’s creative economy policy. Mark Banks raises the concern that using GDP as tool to measure the growth of the creative economy, would lead to the growth of this policy to be a none exclusive plan.<sup>38</sup> However, given the positive impact that the creative economy could bring to the United Kingdom, it gained global attention.

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<sup>31</sup> Landesman, Michael, and Andrew Snell, ‘The Consequences of Mrs Thatcher for U.K. Manufacturing Exports.’ *The Economic Journal* Vol. 99, No. 394, (1989): 1-27.

<sup>32</sup> O’Connor, ‘The cultural and creative,’ 31.

<sup>33</sup> Belfiore Eleonora, ‘Economic impact - inconclusive evidence.’ *Arts Professional* No.43, (2003)

<sup>34</sup> Terry Flew and Stuart Cunningham, ‘Creative Industries after the First Decade of Debate,’ *The Information Society* 26 (2010): 113–123, 113.

<sup>35</sup> Flew and Cunningham, ‘Creative Industries after,’ 113.

<sup>36</sup> DCMS, ‘Creative Industries Mapping Document 1998’, DCMS, (London 1998)

<sup>37</sup> BOP Consulting, ‘British Council’s Creative And Cultural Economy Series 2,’ (London: the British Council, 2010), 15.

<sup>38</sup> Banks Mark, ‘Creative economies of tomorrow? Limits to growth and the uncertain future,’ *Cultural Trends* 27:5 (2018): 367-380.

The creative and cultural policies caught attention from policymakers across the Western world. During 2000s policymakers began to have agreement on the definition of the creative industries.<sup>39</sup> However, the consensus did not last long. Today there are over six recognized classification systems for the cultural and creative industries. The list includes 1. DCMS Model 2. Symbolic Texts Model 3. Concentric Circles Model 4. WIPO Copyright Model 5. UNESCO Institute for Statistics Model 6. Americans for the Arts Model.<sup>40</sup> These classification systems contain some similarity to unique major categories different to suit with the local context.

Enthusiasm for the creative industries continued to resonate among policymakers around the world in the early 2000s, especially from famous academic authors such as Richard Florida and John Howkins. Howkins is one of the vital authors who popularized the term ‘creative economy’ in 2001. He applied the term to the arts, cultural goods and services, toys, games, and research and development.<sup>41</sup> Creativity for Howkins is about ideas that generate other ideas, and how this unique asset of human capital can create wealth.<sup>42</sup> Richard Florida is another popular figure pinpointed towards the importance of the Creative Class from his first book, ‘*the Rise of the Creative Class.*’ He gave the definition on who are the creative class, the listed included engineers and managers, academics and musicians, researchers, designers, entrepreneurs, lawyers, poets, and programmers, who worked based on the creation of new forms.<sup>43</sup> The Florida suggests that creative class could create new wealth in a post-industrial city, a silver bullet to fix all the social, as well as economic, problems. However, it turned out that this was not the case and the creative class did not fix all of the social and economic challenges as featured in as Florida’s claims. Some critiques comprise intellectual and practical problems, from the ambiguity of the definition of creative industries to the suspicion of utopianization of creative labor.<sup>44</sup> As pointed out by Gill and Pratt, an artist or creative worker often faced precarious work situation such as ‘negotiating short-term, insecure, poorly

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<sup>39</sup> Flew, Terry, and Stuart Cunningham ‘Creative Industries after,’ 113.

<sup>40</sup> UNESCO and UNDP, ‘Creative economy report 2013: Widening Local Development Pathways,’ Policy report, (UN Publishing, 2013): 22.

<sup>41</sup> John Howkins, *The Creative Economy: How People Make Money from Ideas*, (London: the Penguin Group, 2001)

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Florida, Richard, *The Rise of the Creative Class: and How it’s Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life.* (New York: Basic Books, 2006)

<sup>44</sup> Mark Banks, and Justin O’Connor, ‘After the creative industries,’ *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 15:4, (2009): 365-373, 366.

paid, precarious work in conditions of structural uncertainty.<sup>45</sup> This could be due to a lack of labor organizations to look after these newly emerging creative labor along with other unforeseen consequences.

## 2.2 Notable silence of the evolution of the creative industry in Asia

Creative industries have been picked up by policymakers from the Western world, including Australia, the United Kingdom since the early 1990s, and the United States in the early 2000s. However, when it comes to the debate around the growing power of the creative economy in the Asia-Pacific, 'Notable silence' is what Kong et al. mention, since the information tends to skew towards Europe and North America.<sup>46</sup> What happen in the non-English speak world seem to be a mystery that need to be bring to light.

Now lets step beyond the anglophone context and look towards the other side of the world. In 1991, George Yeo, the Singaporean Minister for Information and the Arts, publicly suggested that 'to be competitive in the next phase of our national development, we need to promote the arts.'<sup>47</sup> Since the early 1990s, Singapore's leader has had the vision to recognized the importance of the arts and set the new national direction accordingly . The Singaporean government began to execute policies and strategies, through its agencies such as the Economic Development Board to found a Creative Services Strategic Business Unit in order to 'develop Singapore into a center of excellence for the various creative industries.'<sup>48</sup> The Creative Services Development Plan included four major sectors: film, music, media, design, and arts and entertainment, all of which were supposed to get government support. Even if the concrete implementation of the creative policy did not become apparent until the year 2000, the groundwork had been done in Singapore.

Another Asian country that should not be ignored is the Republic of Korea. Especially after *Parasite*, a South Korean base film, just made the history by being the world's first foreign

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<sup>45</sup> Gill Rosalind and Andy Pratt, 'Precarity and Cultural Work In the Social Factory? Immaterial Labour, Precariousness and Cultural Work.' *Theory, Culture & Society*, Vol. 25, No.7–8 (2008): 1–30, 20,21.

<sup>46</sup> Lily Kong, Chris Gibson, Louisa-May Khoo, and Anne-Louise Semple, 'Knowledges of the creative economy: Towards a relational geography of diffusion and adaptation in Asia,' *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, Vol. 47, No. 2, (2006):173–194, 174.

<sup>47</sup> Yeo, G.Y.B, 'Building in a market test for the arts,' *Speeches: A Bi-monthly Selection of Ministerial Speeches* 15(2), (1991) 54–57. Cite from Kong, Gibson, et al. 2006

<sup>48</sup> Lily Kong, 'Cultural Policy in Singapore: Negotiating Economic and Socio-Cultural Agendas.' *Geoforum*, 31(4), (2000): 409-424, 416.

language winner of the best picture in Academy award.<sup>49</sup> The Oscar award did not come by chance for this Korean original film, but it was a result of an extended policy that had begun since the late 1990s. 1999 marked the major turning point when the South Korean government began to pay attention to the new trends of ‘information-driven society,’ and a ‘knowledge-based economy.’ Since culture production in Korea was used work as a propaganda tools for the South Korea’s military government. After the end of the military era (1961–88), Kin Daw-Jung, a newly elected South Korea president, began to see a new use of these creative industries.<sup>50</sup> The government began to notice the importance of cultural industries as an essential ladder for national economic growth.<sup>51</sup> ‘Support without intervention’ was the core policy from the Framework Act on the Promotional of Cultural Industries in the 1990s, along with the Cultural Industries Promotion Fund launch.<sup>52</sup> The significance of this new strategy worked by the government set aside one percent of the nation’s budget to support the cultural industries to expand South Korean cultural products internationally.<sup>53</sup> The South Korean government has recognized the important of the creative economy and support this industry since the 1990s and continue their support ever since.

However, it might sound like a different story if one looks at the official report from UNCTAD on Korean Creative Industries.<sup>54</sup> UNCTAD did not recognize the Framework Act in 1999 as a significant stepping stone that would help lay a strong foundation for the Korean creative industry nor when the Korea Culture and Content Agency (KOCCA) - an agency that is considered as the backbone behind the expansion of Korea’s creative industry - was founded in 1999.<sup>55</sup> However, UNCTAD considered the first mark for the creative industry in South Korea when the Ministry of Science, ICT, and Future Planning was founded in 2013.<sup>56</sup> Somehow, it seemed as if UNCTAD has attempted to turn a blind eye on the past that does not fit with their narrative.

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<sup>49</sup> Catherine Shoard, ‘Parasite makes Oscars history as first foreign language winner of best picture,’ February 10, 2020, accessed March 1, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2020/feb/10/parasite-first-foreign-language-film-to-win-best-picture-oscar>.

<sup>50</sup> Brian Yecies and Aegyung Shim, ‘South Korea’s creative industry markets,’ *In Routledge Handbook of Cultural and Creative Industries in Asia*, (Routledge, 2018): 210-224, 211.

<sup>51</sup> Kwon Seung-Ho and Joseph Kim, ‘The cultural industry policies of the Korean government and the Korean Wave,’ *International Journal of Cultural Policy* Vol20, Iss 4, (2013): 422-439.

<sup>52</sup> Yecies and Aegyung, ‘South Korea’s creative industry,’ 212

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 212.

<sup>54</sup> UNCTAD, *Strengthening the creative industries for development on the Republic of Korea*, (UN, 2017), 6.

<sup>55</sup> Yecies and Aegyung, ‘South Korea’s creative industry,’ 214

<sup>56</sup> UNCTAD, *Strengthening the creative*, 6.

These examples from two countries in Asia illustrate that creative policy in Asia did not lag behind the rest of the world. Nevertheless, it seems like a language barriers and cultural barriers had blocked and shadowed these import steps from most of the academic debate. In addition, intergovernmental organizations underrated the history of what has happened in Asian Pacific.

### **2.3 The impact of policy recommendations on the creative economy from UNCTAD/UNESCO on Thailand**

Since the first UNCTAD Creative Economy Reports came out in 2008 and again in 2010 and 2018, all of these were very influential policy-oriented papers that gave an overview of the potential of the creative economy on a global scale. However, Viassis and De Beukelaer were concerned that the focus on the Creative Economy was built on the same ideas but kept making different claims based on the role of culture and creativity.<sup>57</sup> The claim that UNCTAD made was mainly about how the creative economy could be an essential factor to stimulate economic growth, employment, trade and innovation, and social cohesion as what has happened in many advanced economies.<sup>58</sup> The response to this inferential claim was that several countries end up with a similar set of policies.<sup>59</sup> The 2008 report portrayed a picture of multiple dimensions of the creative economy that not only would contribute to economic growth, but would also support social and cultural development in many ways.<sup>60</sup> It was partly true that the creative economy is not only about producing some goods or services, but also had to be engaged in a more extensive economic system.<sup>61</sup> The debate around the positive and negative consequences of the creative economy need not to be overlook by the policy maker.

The success of the creative economy might contain bias from an intergovernmental organization. De Beukelaer point out many flaws in the UNCTAD Creative Economy 2010

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<sup>57</sup> Antonios Vlassis and Christiaan De Beukelaer, 'The creative economy as a versatile policy script: exploring the role of competing intergovernmental organizations,' *Media, Culture & Society*, 1–18 (2018)

<sup>58</sup> UNCTAD, 'Creative Economy Report 2008: The challenge of assessing the creative economy towards informed policy-making,' *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development*, (2018): 41, accessed December 23, 2019, <https://unctad.org/en/pages/PublicationArchive.aspx?publicationid=945>.

<sup>59</sup> Pertti Alasutari, *The Synchronization of National Policies Ethnography of the Global Tribe of Moderns*, 1st Edition, (Routledge, 2015)

<sup>60</sup> UNCTAD, 'Creative Economy Report 2008,' 24

<sup>61</sup> Stuart Cunningham, 'Trojan horse or Rorschach blot? Creative industries discourse around the world,' *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 15:4, (2009): 375-386, 384.

Reports, the central argument around a country's classification that might mislead the reader to the level of success in the creative economy.<sup>62</sup> The main concern was the inclusion of China as a developing country, where it seemed more like an exceptional case of the single biggest exporter in the world.<sup>63</sup> By including China as part of the statistic of the creative economy outcome, it could in turn devalued the claim benefited. In the year of the 2010 report, China alone exported around 25.51 percent of the global exports in creative goods, whereas the least developed counties export only 0.11 percent of creative goods.<sup>64</sup> As a result, from this exaggerate claim from the report, could suggest that the intergovernmental organization had a hidden agenda in promoting a creative policy to the rest of the world, or it is time to look beyond the trade number and give more attention to the cultural heritage.

If one only focuses on financial benefit, the intrinsic value of culture could be ignored. UNCTAD stressed the benefit of the creative economy is more than the beyond the number of sale, considering it could carry on the symbolic meaning of art and cultural heritage.<sup>65</sup> However, different audiences might not give value to art and cultural heritage at the same level, not all consumers, especially those from developing countries, would have enough resources to spend on creative goods or services. For some, access to basic needs is what they get as a privilege, not as the necessary infrastructure the state would provide. As Gerben Bakker pointed out that not all consumers could appreciate art and culture at the same level since the demand might be only followed after the economic growth, and people started to have more leisure time to spend.<sup>66</sup> Even though cultural and creative economy carry intrinsic value, not all customer would carry the same level of application and would be able to afford value added products or services.

The creative economy might seem like a very promising golden ticket for a country to bail out of poverty or economic crisis. However, we have to keep in mind that each country has a unique set of challenges and one size fits all policy might not work in all contexts. The popularization of creative industry policy might spring out from a misleading statistic that has

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<sup>62</sup> Christiaan De Beukelaer, 'Creative industries in 'developing' countries: Questioning country classifications in the UNCTAD creative economy reports.' *Cultural Trends*, 23/4, (2014): 232-251, 232.

<sup>63</sup> De Beukelaer, 'Creative industries in 'developing' countries,' 241.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid*, 232.

<sup>65</sup> UNCTAD, 'Creative Economy Report 2008'

<sup>66</sup> Gerben Bakker, 'The increase in demand for entertainment Chapter. In Entertainment Industrialised: The Emergence of the International Film Industry, 1890–1940,' *Cambridge Studies in Economic History* 72–109, (2009)

caught interest of the policymaker from developing countries.<sup>67</sup> It could be part of a way to generate a new normative perspective on cultural policy.<sup>68</sup> Alternatively, from an influencer such as UN with a possible hidden agenda to promote cultural policy.<sup>69</sup> Ultimately, no matter what might be the incentive behind promoting any policy, the power to choose the most effective strategy that would fit with a country's context should lie in the hand of the leader and policymaker.

In Thailand, the response to the global trends of creative and cultural policy has resulted in the Thai leader began to show interest in the creative economy. This was followed by policy change to support the creative economy in Thailand which was included in one of the six key targets of the national development plan from 2008 onward.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, it is worth mentioning the partnership between Thailand and UN in a project called the UN Partnership Framework (UNPAF) from 2012 to 2016.<sup>71</sup> Under this partnership, two million USD was put into policy advice on the creative economy. In the area to restructure the national statistic to reach international standard, 'statistical information is required to be internationally comparable in terms of statistical concept, definition, classification, methodology and accuracy.'<sup>72</sup> This partnership has shown how the intergovernmental organization were willing to go the extra mile to push their strategic plan into practice. Apart from that the wider implication on the development of the creative economy in Thailand will be discussed more on chapter 3.

## 2.4 The fundamental value of business incubator

It is always challenging for a new firm to survive in the first few years. Lacking know-how during the start-up phase often leads to business failure.<sup>73</sup> This know-how includes experience, resources, business skills, and connection with people in the industry. These are all valuable resources that could significantly improve the survival rate and growth

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<sup>67</sup> De Beukelaer, 'Creative industries in 'developing' countries,' 232.

<sup>68</sup> Antonios and De Beukelaer, 'The creative economy as a versatile policy script: exploring the role of competing intergovernmental organizations,' *Media, Culture & Society*, (2018):1–18, 15.

<sup>69</sup> Vlassis De Beukelaer, 'The creative economy as a versatile policy script,' (2018): 15.

<sup>70</sup> The Secretariat of the Cabinet, 'Policy Statement of the Government,' March 23, 2005, accessed April 23, 2020, 8. [http://www.soc.go.th/eng/pol\\_55.pdf](http://www.soc.go.th/eng/pol_55.pdf).

<sup>71</sup> (UN Partnership Framework 2011)

<sup>72</sup> (UN Partnership Framework 2011) Page 90

<sup>73</sup> Hannu Littunen, Esa Storhammar, and Tuomo Nenonen, 'The survival of firms over the critical first 3 years and the local environment' *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 10:3, (1998): 189–202, 199.

of start-ups and small firms at an early stage of development.<sup>74</sup> A business incubator could be a needed shortcut to help foster entrepreneurs to strive, stimulate new business creation, and sustainable business growth.

There is no scarcity in definitions of a business incubator since its component has been varied over time. However, in a recent study by Hausberg and Korreck, they put together some common ground after their systematic literature review of 353 articles and define business incubators as:

*'organizations that support the establishment and growth of new businesses with tangible (e.g. space, shared equipment and administrative services) and intangible (e.g. knowledge, network access) resources during a flexible period and are funded by a sponsor (e.g. government or corporation) and/or fund themselves taking rent (or less frequently equity) from incubatees.'*<sup>75</sup>

A business incubator has changed over time, not only in its definition but also in its purpose. A framework by Bruneel et al. has identified the evolution of business incubation into three generations, explaining how the needs of incubatees have helped shape incubator from the past to present. The current generation or the third one holds three value propositions at its core, including the infrastructure, business support, and network.<sup>76</sup>

Business incubators began to gain popularity in the United States in the 1980s, since the decline of industrialization that lead to rapid unemployment from the collapse of traditional industries.<sup>77</sup> In the beginning, it primarily offered affordable office space and shared facilities for companies<sup>78</sup> Moreover, besides offering shared office space and administrative services, a business incubator also offered specific facilities on-site laboratory, and related equipment.<sup>79</sup> Due to the nature of start-ups, they often had cash flow problems and were unable to pay for a high fixed cost for office facility. Business incubation had created a favorable condition for

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<sup>74</sup> CSES, 'Benchmarking of Business Incubators,' *Final Report for European Commission Enterprise Directorate General*, (Kent: Centre for Strategy & Evaluation Services, 2002), 3.

<sup>75</sup> Hausberg, J.P., and S Korreck, 'Business incubators and accelerators: a co-citation analysis-based, systematic literature review,' *J Technol Transf* 45, (2020): 151-176

<sup>76</sup> Bruneel, et al., 'The Evolution of Business Incubators' 110.

<sup>77</sup> CSES, 'Benchmarking of Business Incubators,' 34.

<sup>78</sup> Lumpkin, J. R., & Ireland, R. D, 'Screening practices of new business incubators: The evaluation of critical success factors,' *American Journal of Small Business*, 12(4), (1988): 59–81.

<sup>79</sup> OECD, 'Technology Incubators: Nurturing Small Firms,' (1997): 20.

the development of new firms with facilities and services that would be unafford otherwise. Nonetheless, not all businesses would require office spaces as part of their incubation process. Virtual business incubation is a new method of business incubation where incubatees can be ‘incubated from their own location through the incubation center’s information infrastructure.’<sup>80</sup> The new style that did not require an incubatees to be on-site would also allow the incubator to scale up their support.

The needs of businesses change overtime, there are new demand to fulfill the missing quality of startup which was the lacking business knowledge support. The change become more apparent when the US National Business Incubation Association included the provision of hands-on management assistance as well as technical support services in 1990.<sup>81</sup> Since infrastructure alone cannot help sustain a business, but it is the knowledge that will. Business support include business planning, advice on accessing capital, marketing, identifying suitable business partners, and general strategic advice.<sup>82</sup> Besides, incubators provide valuable management coaching or counseling a guide from direct interaction that allows the transfer of knowledge and resources.<sup>83</sup> This type of interaction between incubators and incubatees allows two-way communication for both parties to learn from each other. Coaching can help entrepreneurs develop and apply leadership and management skills as well as understanding their customer preferences.<sup>84</sup> Training and coaching are a very crucial part of a business incubator to help foster entrepreneurs in the early stage to be equipped with needed skills and knowledge to nurse their business.

Lastly, the factor that business incubator needs to provide is the network. In 1997 OECD published a report admire business incubator as a source of jobs and growth.<sup>85</sup> The added aspect in this report shows that an incubator was not only viewed as a place that provides bricks and mortar, but also a place that provides business and technical services as well as

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<sup>80</sup> Tsai Fu-Sheng, Hsieh L, Fang S-C, Lin J, ‘The co-evolution of business incubation and national innovation systems in Taiwan,’ *Technol Forecast Soc Chang*, 76(5), (2009): 629–643, 639.

<sup>81</sup> CSES, ‘Benchmarking of Business Incubators,’ 4.

<sup>82</sup> CSES, ‘Benchmarking of Business Incubators,’ 450.

<sup>83</sup> Maximilian von Zedtwitz, ‘Classification and management of incubators: aligning strategic objectives and competitive scope for new business facilitation,’ *Int. J. Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management*, Vol. 3, Nos. 1/2, (2003):176-196, 179.

<sup>84</sup> Joanne L Scillitoe and Alok K. Chakrabart, ‘The role of incubator interactions in assisting new ventures,’ *Technovation* Vol. 30, Iss. 3, (2010): 155-167, 159.

<sup>85</sup> OECD, ‘Technology Incubators: Nurturing Small Firms,’ *Working Group on Innovation and Technology Policy*, (Paris: OECD, 1997), 13.

access to finance, including venture capital and possible investor networks. The recent definition of a business incubator has include access to the network as part of the plan, hence ‘organizations that supply joint location, services, business support and networks to early-stage ventures.’<sup>86</sup> The importance of having some link to the external network emerged during the 1990s.<sup>87</sup> The third generation of business incubators began to pay attention to providing access to the networks of external resources, knowledge, and legitimacy since the key to innovation was sufficient diffusion and high-quality integration of knowledge.<sup>88</sup> In a knowledge-based economy, the increasing linkage between organizations could creates social capital that leads to improving the quality and quantity of knowledge and information acquired.<sup>89</sup> External resources also refer to the access to venture capital, from both private fund and angels’ investors or local institution.<sup>90</sup> With the help of a business incubator introducing incubatees to their networks linked to financial institutions or an investor, this help shorten the evaluation periods and consolidating new firm access to funding faster. Business incubators began to gain recognition as a tool of the economic development plan. The notion of an incubator has emerged from the need to improve regional and national competitiveness by fostering innovative firms in the early stage of development with the hope that this sector would grow to be a fundamental driving force of a nation.

## 2.5 Business incubator outputs

While much researches has been carried out into the definition and the work of the incubation facility, not much work had focused on the incubatees and the outputs that they have achieved.<sup>91</sup> With the increasing interest in using a business incubator as a tool for local and regional development, it is necessary to understand its outcome. Outcomes of a business incubator can include a ‘big picture of economic development, technology diversification, job creation, company profits, taxation revenue, business creations, business survivals, the financial of incubatees, and benefits to the local community.’<sup>92</sup> However, Voisey et al. added that other than valid and achievable success measures as a result of business incubators, such

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<sup>86</sup> Bergek and Norrman, ‘Incubator best practice,’ 22.

<sup>87</sup> Bruneel, et al., ‘The Evolution of Business Incubators’ 113.

<sup>88</sup> Tsai Fu-Sheng, Hsieh L, Fang S-C, Lin J, ‘The co-evolution of business incubation and national innovation systems in Taiwan,’ *Technol Forecast Soc Chang* 76(5) 629–643 (2009) 638.

<sup>89</sup> Tsai, Hsieh, Fang, Lin J. ‘The co-evolution of business incubation’ (2009) 638.

<sup>90</sup> Zedtwitz, ‘Classification and management of incubators,’ 179.

<sup>91</sup> Hackett and Dilts, ‘A systematic review of business,’ (2004) 55.

<sup>92</sup> Hannon, Paul D, and Paul Chaplin. ‘Are incubators good for business?’ (2003) 866.

as an increase in sales and cost improvement, soft measures like an increase in business knowledge and skill are equally important and necessary to be recognized.<sup>93</sup> Even if this intangible capital, or what has been referred to as social capital, is deemed to be a valuable aspect of business incubation processes, there has been limited amount of research into the topic.<sup>94</sup> According to Robert Putnam social networks have value.<sup>95</sup> A study on ‘Social Capital in University business Incubators,’ looks at social capital of an incubatees as ‘an intangible resource that allows them to access other valuable resources for their businesses, some of which may prove hard to secure through other means.’<sup>96</sup> Sharing of knowledge could give organizations with an institutional setting, advantage from peak development of social capital.<sup>97</sup> The concept of Putnam on social capital often refers to three components including norms, trust, and social networks.<sup>98</sup> Hence, for a person to join any activities that extended their typical social group, they could gain social capital, and these capital will remain with the incubatees even if they are already graduated from incubation period.

## 2.6 Summary

This chapter began with the historical evolution of the creative industry and how it was later popularized in the UK. The discussion was followed by some examples of the development of the creative policy in Singapore and South Korea to show that Asia did not lag behind when it came to the discourses of the creative policy. However, it could be due to the language and cultural barriers that shadow these important steps from most of the academic debate. This thesis continued by examining how an UNCTAD and UN might want to recommend a creative economy policy for a developing country, and what was the consequence of it in the case of Thailand. This chapter has touched upon the role of the business incubator as a tool for local and regional by supporting small businesses. Finally, explained how incubatees' needs have shaped these three value-proposition which include the infrastructure, business support, and network.

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid, 465.

<sup>94</sup> Scillitoe and Chakrabart, ‘The role of incubator,’ 158.

<sup>95</sup> Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, (New York: Touchstone Books by Simon & Schuster, 2001)

<sup>96</sup> María Redondo and Carmen Camarero, ‘Social Capital in University Business Incubators: dimensions, antecedents and outcomes,’ *Int Entrep Manag J*, (2019): 599-624.

<sup>97</sup> Janine Nahapiet and Sumantra Ghoshal, ‘Social Capital, Interlectural Capital, and the Organizational Advantage,’ *Academy of Management Review*, Vol.23, No.2 (1998): 242-266, 242.

<sup>98</sup> Martti Siisiainen, ‘Two Concepts of Social Capital: Bourdieu vs. Putnam,’ *The Third Sector: For What and for Whom?* Dublin: ISTR Fourth International Conference, (2000): 1-26.

## Chapter 3: Historical background of the Creative industry in Thailand

This chapter will continue to examine the literature on the development of the creative industry in Thailand and give more context for this research. The discussion will start with answering a sub-question on the historical evolution of Thailand as an export-oriented economy, following by explaining the need for a new economic spearhead in Thailand and the last part will be about what is the creative economy, and what has slowed it down?

### 3.1 The historical evolution of Thailand as an export-oriented economy

Thailand is well known for its agrarian economy. In the 1960s, agriculture was the industry with the most considerable employment rate at 82 percent and 39 percent of national GDP. In comparison, the manufacturing sector only accounted for 11.5 percent of GDP and employed only 3 percent of the working-age population.<sup>99</sup> At the time, the leading manufacturing was mostly from simple process industries such as wood, tapioca pellets, tobacco, and sugar.<sup>100</sup> Abandoning of land and natural resources in the region allowed the agriculture sector to climb, however, countries cannot always rely on limited natural resources. An alternative scheme of economic development was needed. The government began to explore the possibility of the manufacturing sector. The import substitution strategy was the first public policy to lead Thailand industrialization process. Under the Promotion of Industrial Investment Act of 1960, tariff protection and assistance for the manufacturing sector, were put in place.<sup>101</sup> The import substitution would make a product from abroad more expensive, which in turn paved the way for a product made in Thailand to establish itself in the market. However, the lack of infrastructure outside of the Bangkok metropolitan area prevented the market expansion beyond the capital.<sup>102</sup> The success of this policy was limited due to the low demand for the domestic market.

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<sup>99</sup> Voravidh Charoenloet, 'Thailand in the Regional Division of Labour,' *In Regionalization and Labour Market Interdependence in East and Southeast Asia*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997): 199-223, 200.

<sup>100</sup> Antonia Hussey, 'Rapid Industrialization in Thailand 1986-1991,' *Geographical Review* Vol. 83, No. 1 14-1993): 15.

<sup>101</sup> Suphat Suphachalasai, 'Export-Led Industrialization.' *In Thailand's Industrialization and its Consequences*, by Medhi Krongkaew, (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 1995): 66-84, 66

<sup>102</sup> Suphachalasai, 'Export-Led Industrialization,' 66.

Shigeki Higashi, 'Economic Policy and the Growth of Local Manufacturers in Thailand,' *APEC Study Center, Institute of Developing Economies* 1-37 (1997): 1.

After World War II, the economy uncertainty ticker the need to set common goal for national development by recognize the importance of human capital and monetary capital. The idea of a national economic development plan came from recommendation of the world bank to revitalize business after the war.<sup>103</sup> Thailand's first National Economic Development Plan that lasted five years, came out in 1961 and lasted till 1966.<sup>104</sup> The first strategy was focused on national infrastructure development to build essential infrastructure such as roads, the generation of electricity, and irrigation to support future growth.<sup>105</sup> Thailand began to allow capitalism to flourish and encouraging the investment of the private sector. The manufacturing production surpassed the agricultural sector in 1984, surpassing the number of exports in 1986.<sup>106</sup> Later, the manufacturing industry became the leading sector of the Thai economy in the 1980s.

The growth of labor-intensive manufactured in Thailand began to rise in the mid-1980s after the investment from aboard flooding into the country. First the wage in the East-Asian newly industrialized countries (Taiwan, Singapore, and Hongkong) began to raise its minimum wage.<sup>107</sup> Secondly, the crucial turning point of the Plaza Accord agreement in 1985 that contributed to waves of investment from Japanese investors. The Plaza Accord joint agreement happened as a result of weakening Japanese yen since World Wars II. The exchange rate of Yen against dollar fell sharply from 4.35 yen per dollar, when official data of yen became available in 1940, to 160 Yen per dollar in 1948, and 361 yen per dollar in 1950.<sup>108</sup> With the Yen hugely depreciation against the dollar and major world currencies, it allowed the Japanese economy to grow prosperously. Other countries felt Japan was taking advantage from the cheap Yen. Then the powerful economies at the time including France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, together created a joint agreement to review economic development policy with the intention

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<sup>103</sup> Chartchai Mooksung, ‘การจัดทำแผนพัฒนาเศรษฐกิจและสังคมแห่งชาติ (The making of the National Economic and Social Development Plans),’ King Prajadhipok’s Institute, accessed April 28, 2020. <http://wiki.kpi.ac.th/index.php?title=การจัดทำแผนพัฒนาเศรษฐกิจและสังคมแห่งชาติ>.

<sup>104</sup> Mooksung, ‘The making of the National Economic’

<sup>105</sup> Charoenloet, ‘Thailand in the Regional Division of Labour,’ 200.

<sup>106</sup> Somboon Siriprachai, ‘Export-Oriented Industrialisation Strategy with Land- Abundance: Some of Thailand’s Shortcomings,’ *Thammasat Economic Journal*, Vol. 16, No. 2, (1998): 83-138, 84

<sup>107</sup> Suphat Suphachalasai, ‘Export-Led Industrialization,’ *In Thailand’s Industrialization and its Consequences*, (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 1995): 66-84, 67.

<sup>108</sup> James R Lothian, ‘A History of Yen Exchange Rates.’ *In Japanese Financial Market Research*, (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1991): 4.

to calibrate Yen value.<sup>109</sup> The Plaza Accord agreement demanded the government of Japan to ‘intensified implementation of financial market liberalization and the yen so that the yen fully reflects the underlying strength of the Japanese economy.’<sup>110</sup> The impact of this agreement was an appreciation of the value of the yen. Many Japanese firms began to seek for the alternative region to be a new production base to overcome the challenge of yen appreciation in order to continue cheap export-oriented production.<sup>111</sup> Since it was no longer practical for Japanese firms to continue production in Japan.

The factors that convinced of Japanese industry to relocation in Thailand not in other East Asian countries was due to the incentive policy that the Thai government had provided for foreign investors.<sup>112</sup> The Board of Investment of Thailand received the order from the state to allow exemptions and tax policies for foreign firms, which they were able to remit most of their profits back to their countries.<sup>113</sup> This lucrative incentive had exponentially attracted foreign investors to build their plantation in the new industrial district of Thailand. There was a statistic showing the risen number of investor files for this scheme. In 1984 alone, over 1.84 billion baht asked for drawbacks from 34,632 filed applications.<sup>114</sup> This number continued to rise to 18.94 billion baht from 357,160 applications in 1994.<sup>115</sup>

Through several stages of development, Thailand has always relied heavily on foreign direct investment. A mega project that was responsible for the large proportion of economic growth came from the Eastern Seaboard Development Plan (ESDP), which consisted of significant investment projects infrastructure in deep-water ports and two industrial districts.<sup>116</sup> During this phase, foreign investment had played a significant role in Thailand’s economic development. The Japanese government approved a soft loan in a total of 134 billion yen

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<sup>109</sup> the Plaza agreement, ‘the Plaza Agreement,’ Economy: Announcement of [G5] Finance Ministers & Central Bank Governors, Internet archive, September 22, (1985) accessed April 18, 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20181203002708/https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/109423>.

<sup>110</sup> the Plaza agreement, ‘the Plaza Agreement.’

<sup>111</sup> Shimomura Yasutami, ‘The Eastern Seaboard Development Plan and Industrial Cluster in Thailand: A Quantitative Overview,’ *In Aid as Handmaiden for the Development of Institutions*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013): 81-123, 112.

<sup>112</sup> Aornarin, ‘Japan: the transfer.’

<sup>113</sup> Siriprachai, ‘Export-Oriented Industrialisation,’ 16.

<sup>114</sup> Paitoon Wiboonchutilula, et al., Trade in Manufactured Goods and Mineral Products, Thailand Development Research Institute, (1989), 58-59 cite from Higashi, ‘Economic Policy,’ 3.

<sup>115</sup> Higashi, ‘Economic Policy,’ 3.

<sup>116</sup> Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB), ‘Thailand’s Eastern Seaboard Development,’ June 20, 2016, accessed April 20, 2020, 2.

[https://www.nesdc.go.th/ewt\\_dl\\_link.php?nid=6473&filename=esdps](https://www.nesdc.go.th/ewt_dl_link.php?nid=6473&filename=esdps).

between 1982 to 1993, which was equivalent to 10 percent of the total loan during this time.<sup>117</sup> The financed provided by the Japanese government helped speed up Thailand to move towards industrialization.

The cluster of development in Thailand only concentrated within Bangkok region, which restricted the ability for the overall economic growth. The 5th National Economic and Social Development Plan (1982-86) was aimed to decentralize economic and promote industrial district growth. The first prominent location in this project is Laem Chabang in Chon Buri Province. It was expected to be a base for exporting small-scale, labor-intensive industrial products, along with being an alternative port to decongestion of Klong Toey port in Bangkok.<sup>118</sup> The second one is the Map Ta Phut port, located west of Rayong city. It was expected to be the base of petrochemical industry's target, and technology-intensive, similar to the Laem Chabang.<sup>119</sup> From then on, there was a period of rapid industrialization within the Thai economy. Foreign investment helped boost the economic expansion in the nation. From 1986 to 1989, foreign direct investment increased over five times at 52,124 million baht in 1989.<sup>120</sup> During this prosperous period, the Thai economy grew at the fast speed of 10 percent annually.<sup>121</sup> However, as the consequences of a booming economy raised wages and create labor shortage, the country began to lose its competitiveness. The labor-intensive tactic to attract foreign investment only works during the beginning of the industrialization process.

One typical strategy, but necessary, was to focus more on 'skill-intensive and technologically sophisticated economic activities' to move towards more innovative product.<sup>122</sup> It could be done by investing in human capital so that the spillover effect would work along with foreign investment gain.<sup>123</sup> However, Thailand did have enough human capital and the intention to do so. The role of the Thai government in industrial policy was minimal, where it only coordinated investment license and import duties. However, there was no attempt to intervene in the market.<sup>124</sup> Without state intervention on the industry's direction, the Thai

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<sup>117</sup> Yasutami, 'The Eastern Seaboard Development,' 82.

<sup>118</sup> NESDB, 'Thailand's Eastern Seaboard Development,' 7.

<sup>119</sup> NESDB, 'Thailand's Eastern Seaboard Development,' 8.

<sup>120</sup> Hussey, 'Rapid Industrialization in Thailand,' 16.

<sup>121</sup> Piriya Pholphirul and Pakorn Vichyanond, 'Thailand,' *In Macroeconomic Volatility, Institutions and Financial Architectures: The Developing World Experience*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008): 157-189, 159.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid, 199.

<sup>123</sup> Somboon Siriprachai, 'Export-Oriented Industrialisation Strategy with Land- Abundance: Some of Thailand's Shortcomings,' *Thammasat Economic Journal*, Vol. 16, No. 2, (1998): 83-138, 84

<sup>124</sup> Higashi, 'Economic Policy,' 17.

market was left dominated by a hand full of big companies that steer country's direction according to their interest.

In summary, the development of the Thai economy evolved from agriculture before the implementation of the import substitution strategy. Nevertheless, this policy was not successful due to the limited consumption demand in Thailand. Then foreign direct investment helped speed up the development of national infrastructure and led the nation toward rapid industrial growth. During the time, the lucrative factor that attracted foreign investors was the cheap labor-intensive production. However, as a consequence of economic growth, Thailand began to lose its competitiveness resulting in an urgent need for a new magic bullet to save the economy.

### **3.2 An introduction of the creative economy in Thailand**

As previously mentioned, the future of Thailand could no longer rely on cheap and labor-intensive production; it needed to rely more on innovative and higher-quality production. The Asian financial crisis in 1997 only sped up the importance of this matter. Thailand was hit hard after the collapse of Thai Baht's value, which was the starting point of the whole Asian economic disaster.<sup>125</sup> The impact of this crisis led to '80% decline in the stock market, 100%, devaluation in foreign exchange market.'<sup>126</sup> As for the reaction of this national setback, Thailand began to gain interest in the concept of the creative economy to restructure the economy to become more balanced and sustainable.<sup>127</sup> The first sign marked as a preliminaries state of the Thai government recognize the importance of the role of design and creativity in economic growth was when the Office of Innovation and Value Creation established in 1991 under the Department of International Trade Promotion, Ministry of Commerce.<sup>128</sup> This organization aimed 'to add value to Thai export products through design and increase the competitive advantage in the global market.'<sup>129</sup> As the government began to

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<sup>125</sup> Hoyoon Jang and Wonsik Sul, 'The Asian financial crisis and the co-movement of Asian stock markets,' *Journal of Asian Economics*, 13 (2002): 94-104, 94.

<sup>126</sup> Jang and Sul, 'The Asian financial crisis,' 94.

<sup>127</sup> Sineenat Sermcheep, Piti Srisangnam, and Seksan Anantasirikiat, 'A Comparative Analysis of Creative Economy Policies of Thailand and South Korea,' *International Review of Korean Studies* Vol.12, No.1, (2015): 45-74.

<sup>128</sup> Montinee Yongvikul, Sirion Hrimpranee, Pannita Mitpakdee, Nuttawee Tangnoi, Peeradorn Keawlai, Patcharawan Kunarattanapruek, and Rinrada Rachkeree, 'THAILAND'S DESIGN INDUSTRY,' *CEA Outlook: Creative Economy Prospect*, (2019): 27.

<sup>129</sup> Yongvikul, 'THAILAND'S DESIGN INDUSTRY,' 27.

show interested in support Thai business to create added value product more and more institution related to design and creativity were found in the early 2000s.

The foundation of public institutions that aimed to support creative work, had drawn attention from the public to this sector. This initial phase can be considered as an ‘incubation period’ a time for planting a seed of the creative economy and creative policy in Thailand from the early 2000s – 2008 mid.<sup>130</sup> The first prominent institution that was founded was the Architect Council of Thailand, which covers three subsets of architectural professions including the architecture, interior architecture, and landscape architecture.<sup>131</sup> Later, a software conglomerate, which included the National Software Industry Promotion Agency, which was founded under the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society in 2003. The following establishment was the Thai Animation and Computer Graphics Association and Business of Creative and Event Management Association.<sup>132</sup> The launch of these organizations had reflected the increasing recognition of the importance of the creative industry in Thailand.

The milestone in the development of the creative economy in Thailand was when the TCDC was founded in 2004. The TCDC was established under the government of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, with the aim ‘to connect and promote interaction among creativity, skill, cultural asset and business conducive to creating quality products and services that meet the global market demand.’<sup>133</sup> The TCDC was founded under the Office of Knowledge Management and Development (OKMD), which also responsible for many knowledge-leading agencies including the National Discovery Museum Institute (NDMI), Thailand Knowledge Park (TK Park), and the Moral Promotion Center.<sup>134</sup> The TCDC has been seen as a vital force in supporting the creative economy development in Thailand.

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<sup>130</sup> Alongkorn Parivudhiphongs, ‘Policy Making of Creative industries in Thailand 2017,’ *The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)*, December 6, 2017, accessed April 26, 2020, 8. <https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/2.2%20Policy%20MAKING%20OF%20CREATIVE%20industries%20in%20THAILAND%5B2%5D.pdf>.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid*, 27.

<sup>132</sup> Yongvikul, ‘THAILAND’S DESIGN INDUSTRY,’ 27.

<sup>133</sup> Asian-Europe foundation, ‘The Thailand Creative and Design Center (TCDC),’ July 4, 2011, accessed April 22, 2020, <https://culture360.asef.org/resources/thailand-creative-and-design-center-tcdc/>.

<sup>134</sup> Orapin Yingyongpattana, ‘Retracing political in TCDC’, March 24, 2007, accessed May 14, 2020, <https://prachatai.com/journal/2007/03/12104>.

In 2005, as part of the policy statement from the government of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, it included in the plan of economic restructuring policy to create equilibrium and competitiveness by using the idea of adding value via a knowledge-based economy.

*'The Government will also encourage the development of industrial networks as well as of value added products on a knowledge basis by promoting knowledge management process at all levels, ranging from local enterprises, small and medium enterprises and large enterprises.'*<sup>135</sup>

This plan came out as a result of a goal to develop Thailand to become a 'knowledge-based economy according to His Majesty the King's concept of a Sufficiency Economy.'<sup>136</sup> This correlation does not imply causation between the knowledge-based economy and the concept of Sufficiency Economy. However, it continued to coexist in the next decade in Thailand. While it seems that the prime minister, Thaksin Shinawatra, contributed heavily to laying a foundation for the creative economy in Thailand, however, after his expulsion in 2006, all of the official reports in the field of the creative economy tended to omit his name. This indicates the trace of the vicious cycle in Thai politics that a new government will often if not always, try to eliminate or hide the work of the previous one, resulting in inconsistencies in national policy time and time again.

The next phase was the policy formulation period, between the late 2008 to mid 2011.<sup>137</sup> A concrete measure on the prominence of the creative economy in Thailand can be traced back from the National Economic and Social Development Plans (NESDP), a five years master plan that set a guideline regarding social and economic development in order to move the whole nation the same direction. At present, Thailand is under the implementation of the 12th NESDP plan that is effective since from 2017 to 2021, with innovation and creativities at the heart of the development plan along with the Sufficiency Economy philosophy.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> The Secretariat of the Cabinet, 'Policy Statement of the Government,' March 23, 2005, accessed April 23, 2020, 8. [http://www.soc.go.th/eng/pol\\_55.pdf](http://www.soc.go.th/eng/pol_55.pdf).

<sup>136</sup> <sup>136</sup> The Secretariat of the Cabinet, 'Policy Statement,' 4.

<sup>137</sup> Parivudhiphongs, 'Policy Making of Creative industries,' 9.

<sup>138</sup> NESDB, 'Thailand's Eastern Seaboard Development,' 7.

The idea of the sufficiency economy philosophy first surfaced in the NESDP since the early 2000s, which has continued to co-exist with creative economy policy until the present. The sufficiency economy philosophy began to gain popularity in Thailand after it was introduced by King Bhumibol Adulyadej back in 1997.<sup>139</sup> This philosophy encourages people to live a moderate life, a balanced way of living while avoiding the overexploitation of resources.<sup>140</sup> Parivudhiphongs notes that the NESDB attempted to link these two concepts after noticing that the creative industry could also decrease excessive consumption, therefore, creating ‘an economy based on human moderation.’<sup>141</sup> However, this is not what the creative economy is all about. The attempt to link two different ideology together would not be beneficial to the growth of the creative economy in Thailand. Since these two ideologies were based on different foundation and the end goal.

The Thai government began to recognize that the creative economy could become the new engine of economic growth. As part of the 10<sup>th</sup> NESDP Plan (2007- 2011), the vision statement for national development is to create an environment for knowledge society that people would have the ability to think creatively with the mission to improve the quality of life in Thailand.<sup>142</sup> Doing so could create some immunity in the Thai economy and allow people to pick out the vibrant local culture and intellect to create value-added products or services.<sup>143</sup> Apparently, all scholars agree on the same direction that the promotion of ‘the creative economy’ began to take the leading role in Thailand on the 11th Plan from 2012 to 2016.<sup>144</sup> The advancement on the creative economy under the leadership of Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva began to take shape slowly under various implementation.

The draft to develop the creative economy in the 11th NESDB Plan included two main objectives. First was to make Thailand become the Creative industrial hub of ASEAN, and second of all, to increase the market share of the creative industries from 12% of GDP to 20% of GDP by 2012.<sup>145</sup> In order to achieve these goals, the government launched 12

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<sup>139</sup> Prasopchoke Mongsawad, ‘THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE SUFFICIENCY ECONOMY: A CONTRIBUTION TO THE THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT,’ *Asia-Pacific Development Journal*, Vol. 17, No. 1, (2010)123-143, 127.

<sup>140</sup> Mongsawad, ‘THE PHILOSOPHY,’ 123, 136.

<sup>141</sup> Parivudhiphongs, ‘Creative industries policy in Thailand,’ 31.

<sup>142</sup> NESDB and TCDC, ‘A Preliminary Study on Creative Economy,’ 33.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid, 33.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid, 50. Parivudhiphongs, ‘Creative industries policy in Thailand,’ Howkins, ‘Developing Thailand’s,’

<sup>145</sup> Arkhom Termpittayapa isith, ‘the Thai Creative Economy,’ *Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council*. March 28, 2011, accessed April 11, 2020, 21.

commitments under the commitments of the Strong Thailand Stimulus Plan, which covered four main pillars from infrastructure, education and human resources, society and inspiration, and last business development and investment.<sup>146</sup> One significant groundwork from this plan was to enhance the standard of intellectual property systems in Thailand since a functioning system of intellectual property rights is required for the development of the creative economy the economy that makes money from ideas.<sup>147</sup> As a result of this policy, Thailand Creative Economy Agency (TCEA), was found.<sup>148</sup> However, this economical goal was never achieved. In 2012, the total the market share of the creative industry was only at 13.2% of GDP far from the goal to reach 20% in 2012, before dropping slightly to 11.9% of GDP in 2013, and then again rising to 13.2 % of GDP in 2014.<sup>149</sup> Even if all scholars agree that the promotion of the creative economy in Thailand began to become established in Abhisit's government, he was only in power for two and a half years. Abhisit announced the dissolution of the country's parliament in 2011. The discontinuity of democratic government has limited the growth of Thailand in every way, including Thailand creative economy.

In July 2011, Yingluck Shinawatra, who won the election, becoming the new prime minister of Thailand. Yingluck Shinawatra was the sister of the former Prime Minister Thaksin, who had been banned from any political activities and expelled from Thailand from late 2006. As part of Yingluck's policy statement, the creative economy was used as a tool to create goods and services with high value and quality, along with recognizing the importance of a knowledge-based economy.<sup>150</sup> Creative industries were viewed as a spearhead for economic growth, while Yingluck's government planned to support the development of SME industries.<sup>151</sup> Moreover, this government has the intent to carry on the work of former Prime Minister Abhisit by injecting 300-million-baht funds to promote the development of the creative economy.<sup>152</sup> It is not a typical move in Thai politics to carry on the opposition

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<sup>146</sup> Howkins, 'Developing Thailand's,' 26.

<sup>147</sup> UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Report 2010: Creative Economy* (UNCTAD and UNDP, 2010) 82.

<sup>148</sup> Howkins, 'Developing Thailand's,' 26.

<sup>149</sup> TCDC, 'TCDC OUTLOOK 01,' January- June, 2016, accessed July 12, 2020, 35.

<http://www.tcdc.or.th/upload/downloads/ebook-TCDC-Outlook-vol1-th.pdf>

<sup>150</sup> Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, 'Policy Statement of the Council of Ministers,' Energy Policy and Planning office (EPPO) Ministry of Energy, August 23, 2011, accessed May 17, 2020, 11.

<http://www.eppo.go.th/images/POLICY/ENG/gov-policy-2554-E.pdf>

<sup>151</sup> Chatrudee Theparat, 'New agency to give creative industries an infusion of funds' August 27, 2012, accessed May 17, 2020, <https://www.bangkokpost.com/business/309507/new-agency-to-give-creative-industries-an-infusion-of-funds>.

<sup>152</sup> Theparat, 'New agency to give.'

government's work, but this can demonstrate that the importance of the creative economy is one thing upon which the political establishment agreed.

However, before Yingluck could execute any policy, she had to face Thailand's worst floods crisis in 70 years. The flood submerged more than two-thirds of the country, including Bangkok, resulted in 815 deaths and affecting almost one-fourth of the population.<sup>153</sup> Yingluck's government 'failed to turn the policy into action during the two and a half years in office.'<sup>154</sup> The future of her populist government came to an end after she introduced the amnesty bill the bill that some critics believed aiming at forgiving her brother, Thaksin Shinawatra, and bringing him back to Thailand without serving jail time.<sup>155</sup> Soon another military coup d'état took place in May 2014, bringing an end to her government, as well as the pause in the development of the creative economy in Thailand. The result of the military coup still lasts until today, along with the attempts to erase every work of the previous opposition government, including the creative industry policy, which will be explained more in Chapter 4 on the struggle history of the TCDC.

To conclude the progress of the creative economy in Thailand, Thai leader has caught on the trends of the rise of the creative industry since the early 2000s when there were many public and private institutions opening up to support the creative class. This included the opening of Thailand's first creative business incubator, the TCDC in 2004. Later on, the improvement of the creative policy began from top-down, from the policy leading by Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva in the early 2010s. However, with the political instability in Thai politics, especially from the two military coups that happen in the past two decades, political instability has prevented the continuity of not only from policy setting but also on its implementation.

### **3.3 The scope of the creative economy in Thailand**

The term creative economy or Settakij Sangsan in Thai has become a catchphrase the past decade or so. However, there are no clear definitions and boundary of this terms. For a commercial purpose, Thailand's creative economy based on the integration of cultures,

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<sup>153</sup> Siân Griffiths, Jin Ling Tang, and Eng Kiong Yeoh, *Routledge Handbook of Global Public Health in Asia*, (New York: Routledge, 2014)

<sup>154</sup> Punpeng, 'Missing in Action.'

<sup>155</sup> Amy Sawitta Lefevre, 'Thai Senate brings forward debate on controversial amnesty bill' November 7, 2013, accessed May 17, 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-thailand-protest/thai-senate-brings-forward-debate-on-controversial-amnesty-bill-idUSBRE9A60DM20131107>.

traditions, and heritage.<sup>156</sup> Although the term creative economy in Thailand did cover a broader scope than what might be perceived in the West, it was still used ‘to refer to the entire system of the creativity-driven economy, including promotion of CI sectors, ICT, R&D, and even the promotion of infrastructure.’<sup>157</sup> While the national planning agency was developing a framework of the creative economy, they were relying on the framework of the multinational agency such as UNCTAD, WIPO, and UNESCO.<sup>158</sup> They also tried to duplicate the success case in countries such as the United Kingdom, Austria, and Hong Kong as a comparison guideline to the development of the creative economy in Thailand.<sup>159</sup> UNCTAD gave the definition of the creative economy in Economy Report 2008 as:

*‘an evolving concept based on creative assets potentially generating economic growth and development. It can foster income generation, job creation and export earnings while promoting social inclusion, cultural diversity and human development; It embraces economic, cultural and social aspects interacting with technology, intellectual property and tourism objectives.’<sup>160</sup>*

On the other hand, the office of the National Economic and Social Development Board of Thailand or the NESDB defined the creative economy as:

*‘an economic system that mixes cultural assets, local wisdom, and the uniqueness of Thai with proper knowledge and technology in order to produce unique and diverse products and services. In this way, intrinsic economic value will be added. It will create jobs, generate revenue, and boost competitiveness which will enhance the quality of life.’<sup>161</sup>*

However, the TCDC referred to creative economy as:

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<sup>156</sup> NESDB and TCDC, ‘A Preliminary Study on Creative Economy,’ 26.

<sup>157</sup> Parivudhiphongs, ‘Creative industries policy in Thailand,’ 29.

<sup>158</sup> Sermcheep, el at., ‘A Comparative Analysis’ 51.

<sup>159</sup> NESDB and TCDC, ‘A Preliminary Study on Creative Economy,’ 47.

<sup>160</sup> UNCTAD, ‘Creative Economy Report 2008: The challenge of assessing the creative economy towards informed policy-making.’ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, accessed December 23, 2019, (2008): 4. <https://unctad.org/en/pages/PublicationArchive.aspx?publicationid=945>.

<sup>161</sup> Howkins, ‘Developing Thailand’s,’ 20.

*‘An economy in which creative entrepreneurs combine knowledge, skills and technologies with cultural assets to develop products and services with “value” and “benefit” that can fulfil consumer needs in global markets.’<sup>162</sup>*

While the definition from these two important institutions regarding the creative economy in Thailand seems to cover a very broad range, there were some keywords in common, such as an economy that produces a new product or services with the use of knowledge, technology, and cultural assets to add value into it. With this broad definition of this sector in mind when it comes to measuring the impact of this sector, Thailand still lacks the continuity and consistency of definition of the creative industry.

### **3.4 Obstacle of the creative economy in Thailand**

The first time that the creative industry's scope in Thailand came out as a basic proposal was in 2009 in the ‘Preliminary Study on Creative Economy.’ This report had followed the UNCTAD model with four main categories and 15 subgroups and adapted some to suit the local context. Hence it also included Thai food and Traditional Thai Medicine as part of the creative industries.

Some official reports, however, seemed to have difficulty in following the guideline set by the NESDB and sometimes only referred to only 12 branches of creative industries by skipping Thai food, Thai traditional medicine, and cultural tourism from the list.<sup>163</sup> This inconsistency in the creative industry’s definition in many reports has degraded the economic implementation of this approach.<sup>164</sup> The troublesome part often laid upon these three unique categories, even though tourism has been a driver of Thailand’s GDP growth and continued to be a crucial source of employment. In 2018, the tourism industry brought about 12.3% of Thailand’s GDP increase from only 5.3% in 2009.<sup>165</sup> Nevertheless, there is no simple way to differentiate between typical tourism with cultural tourism.

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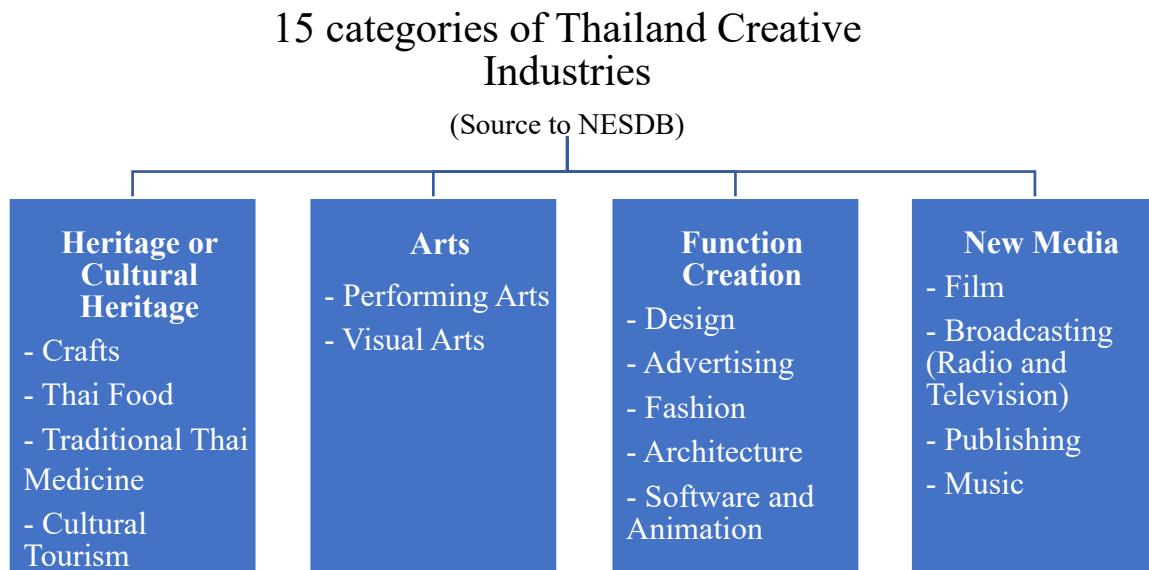
<sup>162</sup> Ibid, 20.

<sup>163</sup> The Committees of the National Reform Steering Assembly 2017, ‘Future Economy: the Creative Economy,’ E-library of the Secretariat of the House of Representative, accessed April 20, 2020. (2017): 2. [https://library2.parliament.go.th/giventake/content\\_nrsa2558/d032760-03.pdf](https://library2.parliament.go.th/giventake/content_nrsa2558/d032760-03.pdf).

<sup>164</sup> Termpittayapaaisith, ‘the Thai Creative Economy,’ 16.

<sup>165</sup> Burin Adulwattana, ‘Tourism: Still a reliable driver of growth?’ Bangkok Bank, May 16, 2019, accessed May 18, 2020, <https://www.bangkokbank.com/en/International-Banking-/media/dc98bd4dd875455299b0c207bf16f2ac.ashx>.

**Figure 1** Categories of Thailand Creative Industries



Source: Sathit Limpongpan, 'Economic reform on cultural and creativity', Thai National Assembly, April 8, 2016, accessed April 21, 2020,

[https://www.parliament.go.th/ewtcommittee/ewt/drive\\_econ/download/article/article\\_20160429093648.pdf](https://www.parliament.go.th/ewtcommittee/ewt/drive_econ/download/article/article_20160429093648.pdf).

Translated by Author

The confusion in the definition and the scope of the creative industry remain and cause difficulty in data collection. John Howkins pointed out this puzzlement in the report in the potential for developing Thailand's creative economy that 'the Government had little information on creativity's economic impact.'<sup>166</sup> The official data often time came from skeptical source and inconsistency definition, hence, the boundary of the industry was too ambiguously.<sup>167</sup> Time and time again, the challenge in the Thailand database has raised some concern to the public. There is no central database that measures or collects the date on the creative economy in Thailand.<sup>168</sup> It is necessary to note that Howkins's feedback on the commission research has not resulted in any change to the classification. Hence it was still in use today. This finding is also in line with a paper on creative industries policy in Thailand

<sup>166</sup> Howkins, 'Developing Thailand's,' 4.

<sup>167</sup> Howkins, 'Developing Thailand's,' 5.

<sup>168</sup> Thanin Pa-Em, 'Development of Thailand's Creative Economy,' Office of Permanent Secretary Ministry of Commerce, March 12, 2009, [http://www.km.moc.go.th/ewt\\_dl\\_link.php?nid=449](http://www.km.moc.go.th/ewt_dl_link.php?nid=449), 27.

CEA, *CEA OUTLOOK 02* (Bangkok: Creative Economy Agency (Public Organization), 2019), 52.

by Parivudhiphongs, who implied that economic interest was not the main driver of the country's creative industries policy in Thailand.<sup>169</sup>

### **3.5 Summary**

To conclude the development of the Creative industry in Thailand. The development of the Thai economy began from the agriculture sector to lead the economy before implementing the import substitution strategy. Then foreign direct investment helped speed the nation towards rapid industrial growth. Cheap labor-intensive production was an attractive factor that draws foreign investors to invest in Thailand. As a consequence of economic growth, Thailand began to lose its competitiveness. The creative economy was viewed as the entire system of the creativity-driven economy that could contribute to sustainable and inclusive growth, however, the instability in Thai politics from an unprecedented number of military coups has prevented the continuity of policy setting, and the weak government that economic interest is not the main driver of the policy setting. Moreover, it is almost impossible to measure the economic impact of the creative economy due to the confusing categories as well as lacking a central database to do so.

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<sup>169</sup> Parivudhiphongs, 'Policy Making of Creative industries,' 40.

## Chapter 4: Supply side: the incubator

This chapter will provide an insight in the development of the TCDC as Thailand first creative business incubator. As previously mentioned in the chapter 3 that the foundation of the TCDC marked an important step on the development of the creative economy in Thailand. This chapter will attempt to answer few questions on the development of the TCDC. First, to what extent does TCDC was depend on political will. Second, what TCDC, as creative industry business incubator, done to help their incubatees enhance their business. Last, the role of a creative business incubator on supporting the creative economy

### 4.1 A Historical development and the political challenge of the TCDC

In 2005, the TCDC was launched with the ambition to foster the country's creativity and inspire innovative ideas among design professionals and entrepreneurs.<sup>170</sup> Mr.Pansak Vinyaratn the first chairman of the TCDC and Chief Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, state the important of creativity as followed.

*'In order to maintain competitiveness in the global market, Thailand can no longer expect to compete with other countries merely in terms of the labor costs. Thailand needs to capitalize on its creativity is in designing products and services for to better meet market requirements.'*<sup>171</sup>

The 'Value Creation Economy' policy was supposed to rely on creativity combined with cultural assets recognizing that the roots of the creativities in Thailand could come from the unique culture and national heritage that can inspire the development of new products and services.<sup>172</sup> From the start, the TCDC has had the mission to be 'a learning center to stimulate the Thai people in recognizing the wealth of Thai value and understand how Thai society has evolved over time and blend our knowledge with creativity and high quality production in order to create additional value for Thai products and services.'<sup>173</sup> The establishment of the TCDC was approved by the Thai cabinet on 2 September 2003 along with seven more

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<sup>170</sup> TCDC, *Annual Report 2007* (Bangkok, 2008): 3.

<sup>171</sup> TCDC, *Annual Report 2007*, 3.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid, 5.

organizations that had mission in human resources development, under supervision of the OKMD.<sup>174</sup> The TCDC is funded by the Bureau of the Budget.<sup>175</sup>

In the beginning, the TCDC was located on the 4,490 square meter facility on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the Emporium Shopping Complex. Emporium is a luxury shopping complex. It houses many international high-end labels such as Chanel, Louis Vuitton, Dior, Prada and Cartier, along with a luxurious cinema, an expansive supermarket and a food court. It was very easy to access this luxury mall since it connected with Phrom Phong BTS Skytrain Station, the main rapid transit system in Bangkok. As stated by the managing director of the TCDC Chiang Mai ‘[s]ince the idea of creative and design is a new thing in Thailand, that is why TCDC choose to locate in this shopping mall. It is in to be closer and become part of the consumer behavior who goes to shopping or watching movies on weekend and stop by this library which is located right next to it.’<sup>176</sup> The idea of locating TCDC in the heart of the city, has slowly worked to gain trust from the public.

The early work of the TCDC was focus on encourage Thai people to recognize the value of design from activities such as exhibition, lectures, and workshop. The reason why an exhibition was use as the lead tools in the beginning was that it could help simplify ideas into an easy to understand format. Under 800 square meters exhibition area were separate into the permanent one under the theme ‘What is Design?’ and the temporary area that often welcome international exhibitions including the world-famous exhibition ‘Vivienne Westwood Exhibition’ from V&A.<sup>177</sup>

The TCDC was also positioning itself as a research center for the growth of creativity by having resource center, design materials library, and having mini TCDC. The TCDC resource center was one of the largest design libraries in the region, with over 15,000 volumes in print and multimedia on the first year. This was a great resource for those who might be interested in the creative industry.<sup>178</sup> The facility inside the TCDC was able to serve 130 seats along

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<sup>174</sup> Ibid, 38.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid, 38.

<sup>176</sup> Imhathai Kanjina, Managing Director of TCDC Chiang Mai, interview by author, April 24, 2020, phone call (translated by author)

<sup>177</sup> Vivienne Westwood Exhibition When: 22 July - 24 September 2006 | 10:30-21:00 Where: Gallery 2, TCDC <http://www.tcdc.or.th/exhibition/8358/>

<sup>178</sup> Ibid, 13.

with a giftshop and restaurant, because of the availability of these resources it has attracted the creative class to visit and socialize in this space.

The TCDC was focused on fostering businesses from the beginning, with the plan to be the bridge between entrepreneurs and designers.<sup>179</sup> It is understandable that SMEs with limited resource might perceive hiring a designer as a big burden, however, if they only knew the benefit of this investment. The benefits of good design to increase sales in the long-term since a good design is not just the appearances, it is also added value which could help create new market.<sup>180</sup>

Then, there was a dramatic change in Thai politics, during the second year of the TCDC in 2006, with the coup d'état against Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra the founder of this institution on 19 September 2006. Amidst of the chaos, the TCDC worked hard on laying the groundwork for facilitating access of knowledge that could stimulate creativity for Thai as well as supporting Thai creative entrepreneurs in strengthening their competitiveness in global markets.<sup>181</sup> As a consequence of the coup d'état, the founder governing board member of the TCDC were all fired from their position to bring in a new set of the governing board into the institution.<sup>182</sup> This one obvious sign from the Council for Democratic Reform, the military junta that governed Thailand after staging a coup d'état, was their attempt to clean up all the work of the expelled Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. This change could bring about the new polar after getting rid of any power from the previous government, as history has a tendency to repeats itself again and again. This was just a starting point for the coming up roller-coaster ride for TCDC.

Even though the need for creative economy in Thailand was tremendous in order to maintain the country's competitiveness. The TCDC received many praises from their work, however, the new government still began to question the spending of this institution, as a result of the TCDC's high expenses on buying expensive archive for its library as well as inviting pricey exhibition from abroad. As a result of the distrustful concern from the government who came

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<sup>179</sup> TCDC, *Annual Report 2007*, 14.

<sup>180</sup> McKinsey & Company, *The Business Value of Design*, (McKinsey Design, October 2018), 5 <https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/McKinsey/Business%20Functions/McKinsey%20Design/Our%20insights/The%20business%20value%20of%20design/The-business-value-of-design-full-report.pdf>

<sup>181</sup> TCDC, *Annual report 2007* (Bangkok, 2008): 13, 67.

<sup>182</sup> TCDC, *Annual report 2007*, 82.

into power by military coup, the budget for the fiscal year of 2007 for OKMD which needed to be allocated to 7 institutions that focused on human resources development including TCDC, were cut more than half, from 2,251.18 million baht in 2006 to only 1,068.48 million baht in 2007.<sup>183</sup> In the late 2007, another challenge hit the TCDC, with the demand to merge the TCDC with another organization under OKMD, to demolish the work of Thaksin Shinawatra. After the concern about budget allocation was once again raised, but this time it was about the salary of the governing board of the TCDC and the rental fee for TCDC to be on top of one of time most prestigious shopping mall in Thailand. In 2007, the yearly fee for renting office on the 24<sup>th</sup> floor of Emporium Tower, as well as the 6<sup>th</sup> floor where the library and exhibition center was located cost over 47.5 million Baht (1.3 million Euro) per year.<sup>184</sup> Finally, on October 17<sup>th</sup> the Board of OKMD was approved to merger the TCDC and the National Discovery Museum Institute (NDMI), to form a new organization called the Thailand Discovery & Creative Center (TDCC).<sup>185</sup> However, this decision did not last long, on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2008, the board of the OKMD revoked their previous decision and brought back TCDC.<sup>186</sup> The TCDC would remain to be the learning resource enter for design and creativity and stay in the same location in the Emporium Shopping Complex.

The TCDC began to extend the learning center to the regional level. Opening miniTCDCs, which offered a smaller scale of library, material samples, mini-exhibitions, and access to the main online database.<sup>187</sup> In 2011, there were 13 miniTCDC located in a regional university.<sup>188</sup> It was soon followed by the first regional resource center, the TCDC Chiang Mai, which offered full services equivalence to the one in Bangkok, opened in 2013.<sup>189</sup>

In early 2015, the future of the TCDC was once again at risk after a military junta took over the controlled the country. Prime Minister Prayuth Chan Ocha, who came into power by a coup d'état, 'approved a proposal to cancel the January 2013 legislation launching the creative economy policies of former Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra.'<sup>190</sup> Hence, former prime minister Yingluck Shinawatra is the sister of the former prime minister, Thaksin

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<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

<sup>184</sup> Prachatai, 'Report: The end of the TCDC 'Transformation' toward Thailand Discovery & Creative Center,' October 23, 2007, accessed May 14, 2020, <https://prachatai.com/journal/2007/10/14601>.

<sup>185</sup> Prachatai, 'Report: The end of the TCDC.'

<sup>186</sup> TCDC, *Annual report 2007*, 82.

<sup>187</sup> TCDC, *Annual report 2011*, (Bangkok, 2012): 9.

<sup>188</sup> TCDC, *Annual report 2011*, 9.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid, 9.

<sup>190</sup> Sasiwan Mokkhasen, 'JUNTA TO REPEAL 'CREATIVE ECONOMY' FUND,' November 27, 2015, accessed May 15, 2020, <https://www.khaosodenglish.com/politics/2015/11/27/1448623144/>.

Shinawatra, who has founded the TCDC. This registration not only impacted the TCDC but also the OKMD, TK park, and Museum Siam. These institutions were considered as work of the former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, a person that the junta wanted to remove from the history books. However, after the announcement of the cancellation proposal went out, there was some backlash from the public along with heavy criticism on and benefits that the TCDC had and could bring to the public. At the end of the day, the TCDC was not shut down but only investigated its spending since public funds supported this institution.<sup>191</sup>

After 11 years of having the Emporium Shopping Complex as their home, in 2017 the TCDC had plan to move to the old Grand Postal Building in Charoenkrung district. This move was part of the initiative to create the prototype of the creative district in Bangkok with an effort to revitalize this vibrant historical neighborhood. Over a century ago, Charoenkrung was once a prosperous commercial district and the main street of Bangkok. However, as time passed this little old district began to decline in prominence. The Grand Postal Building is a historical building that was opened for business since 1940, to serve the growing demand for telegraph business in Thailand and was the symbolic sign of the People's Party to show a powerful and modern image of the state.<sup>192</sup> This movement of the TCDC into an postindustrial site was also resonated with the movement across Europe where many old factories had been turned into a breeding for cultural and creative economies.<sup>193</sup> Then, the 8,700 square meters facility of the old post now began it new purpose to serve as the new creative hub in Thailand.

The next turning point happened after a top-down improvement to turn TCDC into Creative Economy Agency (Public Organization) or CEA in the late 2018 with the new mission 'to promote the Creative Economy as the driving force to a balanced and sustainable economy.'<sup>194</sup> This change would give this agency power and flexibility to support this sector's growth. While the name of the TCDC will remain, it was now a subset of CEA instead of OKMD.

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<sup>191</sup> Mokkhasen, 'JUNTA TO REPEAL.'

<sup>192</sup> TCDC, *Annual report 2017*, (Bangkok, 2018): 16.

<sup>193</sup> Panu Lehtovuori and Klaske Havik, 'Alternative Politics in Urban Innovation,' in *Creative Economies, Creative Cities: Asian-European Perspectives*, L. Kong and J. O'Connor (New York: Springer, 2009), 207-227, 212.

<sup>194</sup> 'About us,' TCDC.

Summarize this section, the TCDC has been work as a center of resource, place of learning, and the support to the creation of the creative economy for the past 15 years. As a result of political tension, the TCDC was almost shut down two times. Political instability also had a direct impact on the stability of this institution from the budget cut to change in the board committee members. However, with all the challenges that the TCDC has faced today, it still standing strong under the new umbra of the Creative Economy Agency as a driving force to continue to support the creative economy in Thailand.

#### **4.2 Requirement to become TCDC incubatees**

If SMEs, startup firms, and the public companies are interested in using the TCDC facilities or services, they can either participate in a free incubation program such as D.R.I.V.E. 2018 workshop or become a paid member of the TCDC. The requirement for one to become the TCDC incubatees might differ from case to case. While the membership fee for the TCDC start from one day pass at 100 baht per day or a yearly member at 600 baht per year for student and 1,200 bath per year for the general public.<sup>195</sup> Members can utilize the TCDC's facilities to help shape their business in this value creation economy.

Since TCDC aims to support businesses in a creativity-driven economy, the target participant of this institution ranges broadly from students, business startups, to long-established firms.<sup>196</sup> Because these groups of participants would have different backgrounds and needs, so the incubation workshops were designed for particular users. For example, in the case of high school students, a seminar or workshop to introduce a creative career could be a valuable opportunity to make them become more aware of the possible career path in the creative sector.<sup>197</sup> Then, in the case of firms that has been operating from 10-20 years, this might be a good time for them to step back and reorganize their thoughts via Design Thinking.<sup>198</sup>

The requirements to quality to become TCDC incubatees varies greatly depending on the program, they are all very competitive indeed. For a workshop such as Creative startup in

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<sup>195</sup> 'Member,' TCDC, accessed May 27, 2020, <https://web.tcdc.or.th/en/member/member-privileges/>

<sup>196</sup> 'Our Service,' TCDC, accessed May 22, 2020, <https://web.tcdc.or.th/en/our-service/>

<sup>197</sup> Imhathai Kanjina, Managing Director of the TCDC Chiang Mai, interview by author, April 24, 2020, phone call (translated by author)

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

2018, an applicant must be a designer or SMEs in the startup phase and work in a creative business for less than three years.<sup>199</sup> While a six-month-long workshop like D.R.I.V.E. 2018, a creative business and innovation development program requires participants to be from a SMEs with over three years of experience, and the businesses must be in one of the three required industry.<sup>200</sup> Alternatively, an incubation that aims for businesses in art and craft called ‘Craftsman Shift 2019’ not only required incubatees to be in the business for at least three years, but also to have sufficient budget to pay for marketing cost, product transportation cost, and exhibition show.<sup>201</sup> The condition of participants could differ from one workshop to the next. Nevertheless, one thing in common is that the incubatees should be able to apprehend the importance of creating new value-added products or services.

Even if most of the incubation workshop organized by TCDC was free of charge, but some came with a price. For instance, an incubation workshop called ‘Creative Business Design & Transformation’ in 2020 charged an incubatees for 5,000 baht or around 140 euros for five continuous workshops with a consultation section that lasted three months.<sup>202</sup> The workshop requirement was more loose since it opened up for business startup in the idealization phase, to the long-existing business that wanted to change its business model. However, as part of the application process, applicants must fill in the ‘Brand Health Check List’ in order to evaluate the stage of their company. To sum up, the criteria to become TCDC incubatees could vary, depending on the different target groups of the workshops as well as the expected outcome of the program.

#### **4.3 The three values propositions of a business incubator**

This part will follow the framework of the supply side of business incubation by Bruneel et al. to explore the TCDC value propositions, including infrastructure, business support, and network.<sup>203</sup> In order to assess the TCDC’s performance on supporting incubatees through its incubation process.

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<sup>199</sup> ‘Creative Startup Workshop 2018,’ zipevent, accessed June 13, 2020, <https://www.zipeventapp.com/e/Creative-Startup-Workshop-2018>

<sup>200</sup> TCDC, ‘D.R.I.V.E 2018: Ideation, Production, Commercialization,’ 5.

<sup>201</sup> ‘Craftsman Shift 2019,’ TCDC, accessed June 14, 2020, <https://web.tcdc.or.th/en/Events/Detail/30215>

<sup>202</sup> ‘Creative Business Design & Transformation,’ zipevent, accessed June 13, 2020, <https://www.zipeventapp.com/e/Creative-Business-Design-Transformation>

<sup>203</sup> Bruneel, et al., ‘The Evolution of Business Incubators.’ 110.

#### **4.3.1 Infrastructure of business incubator**

The TCDC Bangkok located in the Grand Postal Building in the Charoenkrung district. Inside this creative business incubator consist of various facilities designed for different purposes, ranging from basic infrastructure to serve SMEs, startup firms, and the public, such as meeting room small or large, reception service, auditorium, and parking spaces, to the more sophisticated options, such as the maker space, users could test their idea by making a prototype piece.<sup>204</sup> The unique asset of the TCDC that has attracted designers from the past to present was the resource center with over 70,000 items related to creativity and design. Moreover, the TCDC also host Asia's first innovative design materials library, Material ConneXion®, with more than 8,000 samples from all over the world.<sup>205</sup> Material ConneXion® is a world-class materials archive that offers designers, students, and manufacturers opportunities to explore different types of material. This material library also selected material made in Thailand to put in the material library around the world. Nonetheless, the TCDC also has its network throughout the country, thus the main branches in the TCDC Khonkaen, the TCDC Chiang Mai, and 30 branches of miniTCDC partnering with regional universities.<sup>206</sup> This creative business has offered affordable working space to support business startups.

#### **4.3.2 Business support**

Since 2005 the TCDC has been stressed the importance of supporting the creative economy by supporting entrepreneurs to incorporated creativity to create value-added products or services. The TCDC provides exhibitions, talks, seminars, and more extended incubation workshops regularly. The Thai SMEs typically struggle with lacking capital, marketing, business management, and nonetheless, product design and product development. Hence, the TCDC, responds to this issue by organizing numbers of educational and business support program by the experts in the field to help equip its incubatees with the right knowledge to prosper businesses. These real-life experts help pass on the knowledge and expertise to immature firms and speed up the trial and error process. The opportunities for

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<sup>204</sup> ‘Service area,’ TCDC, accessed May 2, 2020, <https://web.tcdc.or.th/en/our-service/service-area>

<sup>205</sup> ‘Material ConneXion® Bangkok,’ Material Connexion, accessed May 20, 2020,

<https://www.materialconnexion.com/bangkok/>

<sup>206</sup> ‘miniTCDC,’ TCDC, accessed June 2, 2020, <https://web.tcdc.or.th/th/contactus/mini>.

incubatees to have access to these experts was almost impossible for an SMEs to be able to afford this kind of service previously. Moreover, the TCDC encourages its incubatees to use creative business solution such as Service Design, and Design Innovation process as a tool for business development.

For businesses that need shortcuts to deal with their challenges TCDC also offer business consultation or ‘Creative Business Service.’ A program aimed to support SMEs, designers, or the public to have access to affordable business and design consultation.<sup>207</sup> The target group of this incubator includes those who might still be in the idea generation phase, to the business startup that wants to enhance their business or even a long-established firm that might need business transformation support.<sup>208</sup> The business support that is offered by the TCDC has been implemented in various ways depending on the different needs of each target user.

#### **4.3.3 Access to Network**

The role of the incubator is to make the connection happen.<sup>209</sup> These connections refer to access to potential customers, suppliers, technology partners, and investors.<sup>210</sup> Over the years, TCDC has developed different ways to incorporate different partnership to benefit its incubatees. Some of examples include inviting representative from public institution to be a special guest speaker in talks or seminar. Moreover, by inviting representatives of private and public sectors to join an incubation project as a panel of judges on the pitching day. To illustrated that some of the TCDC partners include the National Innovation Agency (Public Organization), the National Science and Technology Development Agency, the Innovation and Technology Assistance Program, the Department of International Trade Promotion, and the Department of Intellectual Property. So, if any incubatees needed specialized support they would have the access to contact person in charge from these institutions.

In 2011, the TCDC had collaborated with SME Bank, the Department of Industrial Promotion, and the Ministry of Industry, to launch the ‘Support and Development of SMEs in

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<sup>207</sup> TCDC, *Annual report 2018*, (Bangkok, 2019): 46.

<sup>208</sup> ‘Our Service,’ TCDC, accessed May 22, 2020, <https://web.tcdc.or.th/en/our-service/>

<sup>209</sup> Bergek and Norrman, ‘Incubator best practice,’ 25

<sup>210</sup> Bruneel, et al., ‘The Evolution of Business Incubators,’ 112.

the Creative Economy’ Project.<sup>211</sup> Under this scheme, SMEs that incubated by the TCDC would not only be equipped with business skill but also getting help in preparing document to apply for a soft loan with the maximum limit up to 100 million baht per business.<sup>212</sup> This was also a win-win situation for the bank to have shortcut to the high potential customer, while and support SMEs to have easier access to much-needed resources.

Moreover, others than connected with public institutions, the TCDC also coordinated business matching opportunities for its incubatees to access the market via its strategic partner. One of the well-known partners includes Siam Piwat, the largest retail congomoration in Thailand, which owns many top chain shopping malls such as Siam Center, Siam Discovery, Siam Paragon, and Icon Siam.<sup>213</sup> This connection allows small businesses and creative startups to have access to the market with high purchasing power, while at the same time allows exploit creativity from these marketplaces.

#### 4.3.4 Discussion

An incubator will only become valuable for its incubatees if it could provide all of the three value of the facility, business support, and network. In fact, an incubator is not merely just a provided infrastructure rather it is a network of people and organizations.<sup>214</sup> Let, take the hypothetical example of a startup in the fashion industry to be the case to analyze the supporting role performed by TCDC. The fashion industry held the most substantial proportion of market share all the creative economy sector in Thailand at 504,303 million baht in 2014.<sup>215</sup> Let’s say it is a recent business graduate who wants to start her own circular fashion business.

The first step for her to utilize TCDC support could be in becoming a TCDC member in order to have access to their facilities. A business incubator is a place that offers startup an affordable base, such as working space, shared services, and business support.<sup>216</sup> Then she could she can use the co-working space inside TCDC to do some more research and work on

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<sup>211</sup> TCDC, *Annual report*, 2011 (Bangkok, 2012): 10.

<sup>212</sup> ‘โครงการส่งเสริมและพัฒนา SME ตามแนวเศรษฐกิจสร้างสรรค์’ (A project to support SME under the creative economy), TCDC Exhibition, access May 22, 2020, <http://www.tcdc.or.th/exhibition/8456/>

<sup>213</sup> Pun, TCDC incubatees, interview by author, on April 2, 2020, phone call (translated by author).

<sup>214</sup> Hackett and Dilts, ‘A systematic review of business,’ (2004) 57.

<sup>215</sup> TCDC, ‘TCDC OUTLOOK 01,’ January- June, 2016, accessed July 12, 2020, 35.  
<http://www.tcdc.or.th/upload/downloads/ebook-TCDC-Outlook-vol1-th.pdf>

<sup>216</sup> Allen, David N., and Richard Mccluskey. ‘Structure, Policy, Services, and Performance in the Business Incubator Industry,’ *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* 15, no. 2 (1991): 61–77. 62.

her ideation. Additionally, she could receive inspiration from the TCDC resource center that carries many books and periodicals on design and fashion. Moreover, it would be possible to explore the material & design innovation center to learn more about the existing recycling processes and materials from all over the world and visit the TCDC exhibition. Thus, the underlying infrastructure that TCDC provides for its member seems efficient in serving startup an affordable facility and that they could use this space to generate ideas before attempting to put it into practice.

Later, if she did not yet have a clear picture of her product, she could try to apply for an incubation workshop that fit with her needs. Knowledgebase support has become a popular tool in the recent generation of a business incubators.<sup>217</sup> Although some workshops might design for a startup with little knowledge and experience in doing business, others would focus more on design thinking and human-centric design to plan her new product. Furthermore, since TCDC is not an ordinary business incubator but a creative business incubator, more training is needed to support this group of participants. Since creative industries founded on ‘individuals with creative talent, combined with managers of economic and technologic resources, producing saleable products whose economic value is based on their ‘cultural’ or ‘intellectual’ properties.’<sup>218</sup> The business support program needs to be able to help lay the needed foundation of both business and design, which is what this incubator has done.

Finally, if she could come up with a circular clothing collection sample, it is time to market it. Incubatees could explore the incubator’s productive network, the last value proposition, which is accessible to the external resources, suppliers, legitimacy, capital, potential customers, and investors.<sup>219</sup> TCDC partners include banks so that it would allow their incubatees to have direct access to soft lone. Besides, the TCDC has many large conglomerates as their strategic partner, so there are lists of a company that might be interested in exploiting the new innovative ideas.

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<sup>217</sup> Bruneel, et al., ‘The Evolution of Business Incubators’ 112.

<sup>218</sup> Pinho, ‘Creative business entrepreneurship,’ 371.

<sup>219</sup> Zedtwitz, ‘Classification and management of incubators,’ 179.

Fu-Sheng, Hsieh, Fang, and Lin, ‘The co-evolution of business incubation,’ 638.  
Bruneel, et al., ‘The Evolution of Business Incubators,’ 112.

In conclusion, the analysis of the three-value preposition framework was efficient in evaluating the role of an incubator performed by the TCDC base on the sample case. The criteria used to analyze a business incubator seem to touch upon all the basic demands to start a new business from challenges such as lacking resources, business skills, and access to the productive network.<sup>220</sup> However, noted that not all of the project list above happens regularly, so it would also depend on the timing of participating in TCDC to get the most support. This part has attempted to assess the incubator's performance on its role to support individual incubatees in the creative industry. Next, will take a look at the role of the incubator as a driver for enhancing the creative industries in Bangkok.

#### **4.4 The role of creative business incubator in a creative city**

According to Allen Scott, the ideal picture of the creative city consists of many combinations of people and places. She put it as ‘an employment base comprising successful new-economy industries, a vibrant pool of talented and qualified labor, high levels of environmental quality, a dynamic cultural milieu [...] iconic architecture, and a unifying symbolic identity in the guise of a striking global brand.’<sup>221</sup> It is a quality that requires not only space but also supports from the creative class community. Ever since the idea of that the creative class could bring economic growth and wealth had been introduced, increasing attention was put into the study of this group of people, however, where these people live, and work seem too often to have been ignored.<sup>222</sup>

Cohendet et al. point out that there is more to the economic development based on the raising of the creative class, which is how an urban city or a place fosters people to be more creative.<sup>223</sup> A creative milieu is a physical setting that consists of the right condition that would allow the flow of ideas.<sup>224</sup> Based on Cohendet et al.’s study on ‘the anatomy of the creative city’, there are three essential components in every creative city: the *upperground*, the *middleground*, and the *underground* (see Appendix A for the full framework).<sup>225</sup> The

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<sup>220</sup> Luis Manuel Fe de Pinho, ‘Creative business entrepreneurship: the Portuguese creative business incubators.’ *Int. J. Transitions and Innovation Systems*, Vol. 1, No. 4, (2011): 367-382. 368.

<sup>221</sup> Allen Scott, ‘Beyond the Creative City: Cognitive–Cultural Capitalism and the New Urbanism,’ *Regional Studies*, 48:4, (2014): 565-578, 566.

<sup>222</sup> Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class* (New York: Basic Book, 2002)

<sup>223</sup> Cohendet, Grandadam, and Simon, ‘The Anatomy of the Creative City,’ 92.

<sup>224</sup> Charles Landry, *The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators*, (London: Earthscan, 2008) 133.

<sup>225</sup> Cohendet, Grandadam, and Simon, ‘The Anatomy of the Creative City,’ 92.

first level is the *upperground* or the level of a formal organization such as universities, research labs, or a financial institution.<sup>226</sup> Secondly, the *underground* refers to a creative class or an individual outside of a formal institution.<sup>227</sup> Last but not least, the *middleground*, the level that plays the most crucial role in a creative city, since the *middleground* is where the interaction between the *upperground* and the *underground* happens. In this space, it would allow for both the exploration and exploitation of creativity to take place.<sup>228</sup> The *middleground* could be a place such as a café, restaurant, public area, or an event that would allow connections to happen between various groups.

Only around 2.54% of Thailand working age population were working in the creative economy in the first quarter of 2016.<sup>229</sup> Hence, this percentage came from 860,654 people base on the ISCO-08 (International Standard Classification of Occupations).<sup>230</sup> While almost half of the total creative workers live in Bangkok, the landscape of the creative class in Bangkok was totally different from other region that the commonly people work in art and craft industry. In Bangkok, the advertising industry has the highest number of workers (See figure 2), although, this official number might not reflect the real faces of the *underground* in Bangkok, since this statistic was based on official governmental reports, registration, and census.<sup>231</sup> As a result some of the underground movement that is done outside of any formal institution most likely that it will not be included in this statistic. Additionally, if artists that work in a formal office work that have nothing to do be the creative economy during the day but have side job such as being a Youtuber, singer, or illustrator they might not have registered themselves under any benchmarks indicating membership of the of creative class. Even if the International Standard Classification of Occupations guideline also include ‘Code 3435 other artistic and cultural associate professionals’ as part of the occupation.<sup>232</sup> Therefore, the number of creative class in Bangkok can only be used as a guideline to get a better picture of the creative landscape but not as valid fact to measure the *underground* in this city.

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<sup>226</sup> Ibid, 95.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid, 96.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid, 98.

<sup>229</sup> TCDC, ‘TCDC OUTLOOK 02,’ July- December 2016, accessed July 13, 2020, 36.

[http://www.tcdc.or.th/upload/downloads/Outlook2\\_th.pdf](http://www.tcdc.or.th/upload/downloads/Outlook2_th.pdf)

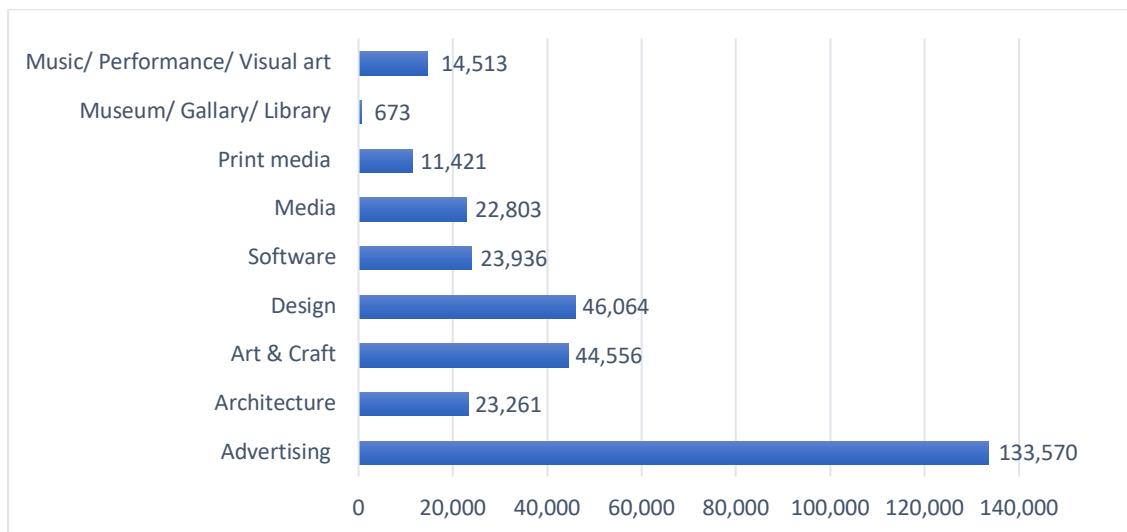
<sup>230</sup> TCDC, ‘TCDC OUTLOOK 02,’ 35.

<sup>231</sup> National Statistical Office, ‘The process of collection statistic information’ accessed July 13, 2020.

[http://service.nso.go.th/nso/knowledge/estat/estat1\\_6.html](http://service.nso.go.th/nso/knowledge/estat/estat1_6.html)

<sup>232</sup> National Statistical Office, ‘*Transalated version of International Standard Classification of Occupation: ISCO-08*,’ 2010, accessed July 13, 2020. <http://statstd.nso.go.th/classification/download.aspx>

**Figure 2** Number of creative class in Bangkok in 2016



Source: TCDC, 'TCDC OUTLOOK 02,' July- December 2016, accessed July 13, 2020, 39. [http://www.tcdc.or.th/upload/downloads/Outlook2\\_th.pdf](http://www.tcdc.or.th/upload/downloads/Outlook2_th.pdf)

The creative class in Bangkok include those in the *underground* where they were tied together by their passion for arts and culture, as well as those in the *upperground* from the public institution that aim to support its citizen. In order to support the growth of the creative economy in Thailand it is necessary to bridge these two group together to let the process of exploration and exploitation to take place. This is how a creative business incubator could contribute to the growth of a creative city by constructing the *middleground* space as an intermediate structure to link the two worlds.

A creative business incubator plays an important role in support to the growth of a creative city. 'Thailand has plenty of great ideas, however, we lack the efficiency connection,' said Imhathai Kanjina the managing director of the TCDC Chiang Mai.<sup>233</sup> The connection that Imhathai referred to was the connection that bridged between the communities of creative actors and the public institutions that could support them. The missing gap that exists in Thailand was that the talented individuals, startup companies, creative, the so called *underground*, could not access support from the government institutions, banks, or big businesses, the *upperground*.

It could be challenging for an artist who enjoys creating an amazing works of art, to organize an exhibition or attempt to commercialize their work individually. Therefore, if a creative

<sup>233</sup> Imhathai Kanjina, Managing Director of the TCDC Chiang Mai, interview by author, April 24, 2020, phone call (translated by author)

business incubator can help provide an infrastructure, such as shared spaces, office services, and resource centers. It could be that these spaces that help nurture the fusion of *underground* creative to interact and to get some inspiration. Moreover, since one of the key features of today's business incubator is its ability to provide access to the networks, external resources, this is how an incubator could be the bridge to help link the *underground* to the formal *upperground* institutions that have ability to support and exploit the new ideas and find a new used for a new creation. This is how a creative business incubator could contribute to the growth of a creative city.

#### **4.5 The 'anatomy of the creative city' framework**

A rich *middleground* would allow knowledge exchange and transmission in the city. The main goal of this part is to apply the 'anatomy of the creative city framework to evaluate the TCDC's role in foster the synergy between different sectors in Bangkok.<sup>234</sup> Since the idea of the creative city consists of combinations both people and places.<sup>235</sup> Under this framework, research suggests that four factors make up the *middleground*, including project, place, space, and event. The TCDC has been work as the touching point between creative class in Bangkok and the formal institution and balances the exploration and exploitation of creative work in this *middleground* space.

##### **4.5.1 Project**

There are many projects that TCDC has organized throughout the year to fulfill different parts of the institution's strategic plan. One of which is to promote and pass on the knowledge of the creative economy to the public.<sup>236</sup> In 2018 alone, the TCDC had organized over 15 activities under this goal 'to support the developing potential and increasing business opportunities for Thai SMEs in the creative economy.'<sup>237</sup> These activities included one-day seminars, and workshops that could last for a few days to a few months. In turn, they created the *middleground* to link up the formal institution with the creative class. The most extended workshop in 2018, which lasted seven months and received the most funding and support from the public and private sector was 'D.R.I.V.E 2018.' By emphasizing on this example,

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<sup>234</sup> Cohendet, Grandadam, and Simon, 'The Anatomy of the Creative City,'

<sup>235</sup> Scott, 'Beyond the Creative City,' 566.

<sup>236</sup> TCDC, 'Annual report 2018.' TCDC. Accessed December 22, 2019. (2018)

<sup>237</sup> TCDC, 'Annual report 2018.'

the author believes that it could better explain the work of the TCDC as a creative business incubator.

‘D.R.I.V.E. 2018: Ideation, Production, Commercialization’ is an incubation project for business transformation that last from March to September 2018. This program was an extensive cooperation between TCDC with experts from both private and public sectors. Some examples of highly respected public institutions include National Innovation Agency (NIA), National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA), and Department of Intellectual Property (DIP). These *upperground* institutions organized activities to support the grow Thai business every now and then. However, because of the high bureaucratic system in Thailand, it could be challenging for SMEs to find touchpoint of these organizations on its own. All of the participant was trained on the TCDC site for the whole six-month workshop, and during the training participant could use the meeting rooms as well as having access to the TCDC resource center free of charge. The workshop aims to equip incubatees with necessary means to start a business or in this case rethinking about their existing business model.

Over the years, the TCDC has invited businesses and other project artists, designers, and startups to participate in an incubation project that would allow them explore possibility to commercialize their intellectual capital as well as inspire from their peers. The example of the project of the D.R.I.V.E. 2018 shows that a workshop like this could help direct the interaction between different components of creative city especially bridging the *underground* of small businesses to the public institution that listed as the *upperground*.

#### 4.5.2 Place

Place or physical space is a necessary component for communities to be able to corroborate and create something new together. It could be anywhere from café, public area to an incubator like the TCDC.<sup>238</sup> Under the 8,700 square meters of this creative hub, the TCDC has provide many areas where people can meet and share their ideas. Starting from the entrance on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor, there is a café and living area, then after entering the membership zone are more spaces such as resource center, maker space, and material & design innovation center. In this place creative individual from the *underground* can frequently interaction and

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<sup>238</sup> Cohendet, Grandadam, and Simon, ‘The Anatomy of the Creative City,’ 108.

utilize the available service provided by the incubator. In 2018, there are over 333,575 visitors to TCDC Bangkok in this number some of whom has visit temporary exhibition, attend seminar, or even participate in a hands-on workshop inside the maker space.<sup>239</sup> TCDC has gained the trust from the public not only from be a large facility with creative resources, but it was also from being the place that can attract different group of visitor to corroborate and to meet with other like-minded participant.

#### 4.5.3 Space

A space of interaction, which allows informal interaction to take place. Hence, ‘space provides the local milieu with cognitive platforms of knowledge, where different communities can get together and exchange new ideas both locally and more globally.’<sup>240</sup> The TCDC coworking space was recognized as a popular working spot for creative freelancers in Bangkok. Similarly, it is space where architecture students often meet up not only because it is equipped with design material but also because they feel a sense of belonging in this space. In some cases, space could happen from the top-down initiatives when the exhibition brings different people with similar interests together to exchange their ideas in this *middleground*. One exhibition that receives the most attention in 2018 called ‘Dear Elders, Hello me in the future’ with 29,059 visitors between January 27 to April 29, 2018. Thailand is one of the world’s rapidly aging societies, and the number of people aged above 60 projected to be double in the next 20-30 years or so.<sup>241</sup> Thus, the TCDC wants to invite visitors to explore a different aspect of challenges and opportunities that might come with this change. This exhibition also displays some work of teams that participated in the ‘Designing Impact Program 2017,’ as well as hosting a mini-seminar and a workshop under the same theme. From organizing type of exhibition, it had created space for interaction that allowed the different entity to exchange their idea and explore the possibility of others’ perspectives.

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<sup>239</sup> TCDC, *Annual report 2018*, 32.

<sup>240</sup> Patrick Cohendet, David Grandadam, and Laurent Simon, ‘Rethinking urban creativity: Lessons from Barcelona and Montreal,’ *City, Culture and Society* 2, (2011): 151–158, 153.

<sup>241</sup> Vipan Prachuabmoh, ‘Aging in Thailand,’ accessed July 11, 2020, [https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/events/pdf/expert/29/session3/EGM\\_25Feb2019\\_S3\\_Vipa nPrachuabmoh.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/events/pdf/expert/29/session3/EGM_25Feb2019_S3_Vipa nPrachuabmoh.pdf)

#### 4.5.4 Event

An event is an important temporary starting point to connect to different communities. In fact, organizing an event has been recognized as part of the urban development strategy worldwide.<sup>242</sup> The TCDC has organized a yearly event called the Bangkok Design Week (BKKDW) to provide ‘an intellectual playground for creative people, government agencies, and business.’<sup>243</sup> This annual event lasts almost two weeks and brings synergy between creative class, local communities, and formal institutions, which happens in this temporary *middleground space*. The BKKDW attracted over 800,000 visitors in their first two times in 2018 and 2019, which also created a substantial economic contribution of over 463 million baht.<sup>244</sup> The event included activities such as exhibitions, talks, workshops, tours, shows, and creative market, that spread throughout the venue across Bangkok. This type of event was a chance for TCDC to expand its touch point beyond the physical structure of the TCDC office.

This weeklong event consists of various shows from the *underground* creative class, such as live music, film screenings, art shows, and performances. In a creative city like Bangkok, there is always some source of art performances happen almost every night. However, it often shows a niche audience. The BKKDW has helped put the spotlight on *the underground* creative movement in Bangkok. In turn, these shows could help raise the public awareness of these valuable cultural assets in the city as well as create more connections for businesses who might be interested in exploiting these artists in the future. The BKKDW is also an opportunity for marker trials for many creative businesses. The TCDC Incubatees were invited to sell their goods in the ‘Creative Market’ and other creative entrepreneurs and designers.<sup>245</sup> Another illustration of how the TCDC supports its incubatees and startups was by creating some touchpoints with their consumers.

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<sup>242</sup> Greg Richards and Robert Palmer, *Eventful Cities: Cultural Management and Urban Revitalisation* (New York: Elsevier, 2010), 2.

<sup>243</sup> ‘About Bangkok Design Week,’ Bangkok Design Week 2020, accessed May 27, 2020, <https://www.bangkokdesignweek.com/about>.

<sup>244</sup> ‘About Bangkok Design Week,’ Bangkok Design Week.

<sup>245</sup> ‘About Bangkok Design Week,’ Bangkok Design Week.

#### 4.5.5 Discussion

The analysis of the four attributes of the TCDC based on the ‘anatomy of the creative city’ framework shows that TCDC has the ability of *the middleground* device to foster both characteristics of exploration and exploitation to occur. Urban curation could help support the creation of a creative space.<sup>246</sup> First, the TCDC organized many projects in the past to serve its strategic plan, such as D.R.I.V.E. 2018. A workshop that cooperates extensively with experts from both private and highly respected public institutions. As a result, it created the *middleground* for the creative class to explore the possibility of inventing a new product or service. At the same time, it also links them with the formal institutions in the *upperground*. Next, under the 8,700 square meters facility of the TCDC, users can mingle in one of many rooms such as café, living area, resource center, maker space, or material & design innovation center. Third, the TCDC has created space for a different group to mingle. In some cases, under a theme that allows like-minded to explore a particular set of challenges together. Last, a yearly event like Bangkok Design Week was an excellent opportunity to be an intellectual playground for a different entity to connect and provided opportunities for underground creatives to showcase their work to a source of inspiration for the upperground.

#### 4.6 The drawback of the TCDC

TCDC is a great place for those who are interested in incorporated art and design into their products or services, since this institution have main expertise in the design industry. Which aim to support entrepreneurs to use knowledge, skills and technologies with the Thai cultural assets to introduced new products or services in the creative economy.<sup>247</sup> However, the expertise in design for the functional creation is also imply that it cannot support the whole creative industry that well. The industry that has often been neglected is the media group that include broadcasting, music, film, and publishing. There were some seminars and talks under the theme of media but none of the incubation workshops focused on this industry.

Moreover, the TCDC work differently from other creative incubator workshop in a way that it did not incubate its incubatees on site, but did it through seminar, training, and various workshop over the years. Nonetheless, the longest incubation workshop was still less than a

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<sup>246</sup> Lehtovuori and Havik, ‘Alternative Politics in Urban Innovation,’ 207.

<sup>247</sup> Howkins, ‘Developing Thailand’s,’ 20.

year long. This type of service that this creative business incubator offers might not be sufficient for all type of businesses, especially for business that require more time in research and development. From the way TCDC incubation projects were set up it seem to only aim for create an incremental change not radical change among its incubatees, besides, a short-term measurable result over the long-term impact that might carry lower success rate.<sup>248</sup>

Next, is the challenge as a result of the institution structure for being a governmental service with high bureaucratic working style. This obstacle includes document processes that one of the TCDC staff refer to as ‘100% bureaucracy,’ which means a complicated and slow process. The evident of this challenge become clear when the author attempted to access the TCDC authority for this research interview, which required of official letter that needed to be approved by several people in charge that the request for an interview. The process time took two months before the official approved, hence this was also due to the governmental lock down as a result of the spread of the COVID-19. While the typical process time for this type of inquiry should take around 2-4 weeks. As the result of hierarchical organizational structure any decision making needs to be approved from the top down could be hulking.

#### **4.7 Summary**

The journey of the TCDC as the supplier of the incubator has been a roller-coaster ride since its opening in 2005. When a new political polar came into power, it often attempted to get rid of any works from the previous government. A vicious cycle that has repeatedly been happening in Thailand and the TCDC was another example of it. However, even after almost being shut down for two times, change in the board committee, and significant budget cut. At the end of the day, the importance of support the creative economy seems to be one thing that all Thai leaders agree. A creative business incubator like TCDC was used as a tool for local and regional development and helped maintain country competitiveness and create sustainable growth. The TCDC has provided infrastructures like resources center that is filled with worthwhile creative industry material, much needed business support for its incubatees, and valuable connection to the network partner.

Moreover, the role of the TCDC in the creative economy was to fill the *middleground* gap. The *middleground* that the TCDC created from creating project, place, space, and event

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<sup>248</sup> TCDC, *Annual report 2018*, 46. Phongsathorn Laiadon, D.R.I.V.E. 2018’s project director, interview by author, April 20, 2020, phone interview

has helped bridged, the creative class, SMEs, and start-ups in the *underground* to the formal institution with resources, or ever-larger conglomerate in the *upperground*. The TCDC also generates facilities to allow the diffusion of knowledge among the creatives in the *underground*. The problem now is that the capabilities for the TCDC to support the public were too limited.

## Chapter 5: Demand side: the incubatees

This chapter will begin with the three case studies to provide verity background of incubatees and some possible outcomes. Then, explore the impact of a creative business incubator on the incubatees. Subsequently, the critical analysis on the creative industries discourse in Bangkok based on the data that collected through semi structured interviews.

### 5.1 Case study on the impact of the incubatees

#### 5.1.1 Case study 1: 32 Things

Pun, a 28-year-old illustrator from Chiang Mai, the biggest city in the northern region of Thailand, realized that working in their family business was not the career pathway she was looking for after working with them for some time. In 2015, she started a Facebook fan page to exhibit her illustration work with unique and a bit disturbing looking style. Pun has an affection toward the art of body parts, which can be observed in much of her work. One of her early work is a freehand drawing of a long haired woman that is embellished with flowers, and most importantly, a very detailed drawing of the women's entrails.

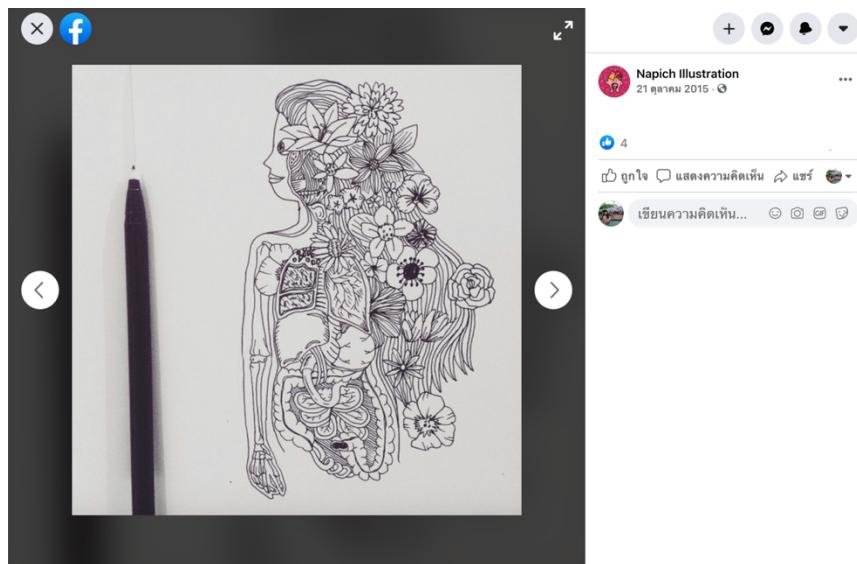
Sketching has been her side job along with her graphic design work for a creative agency. Occasionally she has managed to sell her work of artwork such as the 'Anatomical Heart Ring,' a ring with the handcraft heart shape that made out of silver-plated brass in 2016. Additionally, a collaborative work with 'Case by Case,' a phone case shop.<sup>249</sup> To design an iPhone case and was sold in the same year.

Recently, she went back to Chiang Mai, to help with her family business. In Thailand, families often have a strong influence and control over their children, even if their children have already become a legal adult. Pun's parents believed that becoming a fulltime artist can never make her successful. Since they did not see any future in their child's talent in art, it often resulted in quarrels and misunderstanding in the family.

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<sup>249</sup> Napich Illustration x Case by Case <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=536618569856403>, access May 11, 2020.

**Image 1** A sketch of female with flowery hair since 2015



Source: 'Sketch of female with flowery hair'

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=429209873930607&set=a.429209673930627>, access May 11, 2020.

**Image 2** An anatomical Heart Ring



Source: 'Anatomical Heart Ring' <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=523023487882578>, access May 11, 2020.

Pun began to look for a new job that was not in graphic design because she no longer wished to work as a freelancer in this field. One day she came across advertising from the TCDC's Facebook fan page about this a great training opportunity for a young creator and entrepreneurs who wanted to start their own business but was lacking the know-how.<sup>250</sup>

<sup>250</sup> 'Creative Startup 2019,' <https://www.facebook.com/TCDCChiangMai/posts/1987181684724191>, access May 11, 2020.

During the workshop, the participant would get to learn about Design Thinking and the philosophy of design to create a useful product for everyday life. Pun immediately signed up for this ‘Creative Startup 2019’ workshop which was organized by TCDC Chiang Mai.<sup>251</sup>

Eventually, she got accepted onto the 4-month training program. In the first few training sessions, there was a chance for the trainer to get to know the trainees in order to give a personalized recommendations and feedback, while laying foundational knowledge on ‘Human Center Design.’ Many success case studies were given in the class to allow incubatees to have a grip on infinite possibilities that the creative economy could bring.<sup>252</sup> It was not until the second month of training that Pun began to discover her new passion for making ceramic art after discussing the possibility of utilizing her skill with her mentor. The TCDC also helped link her to some suppliers, which she later used one of the factories to produce her product. Her work began to develop slowly, but surely. The business knowledge developed in the workshops, such as Business Canvas, Design Concept, and Sketch Design was integrated into the learning together with design development. After several trials and errors, she finally made a prototype of ‘32 Things,’ which consisted of 9 ceramic works of a human body part such as brain, eyes, teeth, lung, stomach, and vagina under the design concept of how all of our body parts are interconnected.

Because of her outstanding collection, she was invited to show her work at ‘Chiangmai Design Week 2019’ from 1-15 December 2019. This platform allowed her to gain free media coverage. Later on, ‘32 Things’ was selected to be sold in the ‘Creative Market 2020’ during Bangkok Design Week from 2-6 February 2020, along with 70 shops from designers and creative entrepreneurs<sup>253</sup> She found this very beneficial, stating that ‘I was thrilled that from these four days event, I made over 20,000 baht profit’ 20,000 baht is around 570 euro.<sup>254</sup> Another valuable aspect that she received from these exhibitions was the customer insight, which gave her direction to develop ‘32 Things.’

Other than providing knowledge and tools to develop a new product or service, the TCDC also created business matching opportunity. For it incubatees to meet with representative from Siam Piwat, the largest retail company in Thailand which own almost all the top chain

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<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> See: Appendix D for training detail.

<sup>253</sup> ‘About Bangkok Design Week,’ Bangkok Design Week.

<sup>254</sup> Pun, Interviewed on 2 April 2020, by phone call.

shopping mall such as Siam Center, Siam Discovery, Siam Paragon, and Icon Siam. It turned out that the representative from this large conglomeration was interested in ‘32 Things’ and wanted to sell it in Icon Siam, one of the largest shopping mall in Thailand.

Then, Pun’s parents began to look at their daughter differently.

### **Image 3 The 32 things**



Source: ‘The 32 Things,’

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=1216823255169261&set=a.430233393828255>, access May 11, 2020.

#### **5.1.2 Case study 2: DeCycle Rubber tile**

After 15 years in the construction chemicals business, Miss Lek thought it was time for something new, for some improvement and professional development. Ten years ago, when she just started this business, she had a chance to visit construction fair abroad. It was then that she came across one innovative product that turned plastic waste into recycled construction material. However, with limited resources, this project was put on hold. Cash flow is one of the essential parts of any business, so with the time constraints, many small businesses have to prioritize their main business over invent a new innovating product that might or might not make any profit quickly.

The thought of inventing an innovative eco-friendly product was always in the back of her mind. Until one day, her friend recommended an affordable consultation section at Bangkok Design Week, which was organized by TCDC. After she discussed with an expert, it was a moment of realization for her, stating that: 'I have discovered that the problem with product development that took me years to crack can be solved within a few hours, after talking with the design specialist from TCDC.'<sup>255</sup> This was the starting point for her to participate in TCDC activities and bring the idea of producing recycled material back to life.

Attending 'D.R.I.V.E. 2018' changed her perception on doing business. She said that because she used to only sell consumer products, so she had quite a narrow-minded mindset. The mindset that came from limited experience only in transaction between business-to-business. After attending the workshop, it has inspired her to rethink and try to put on different hats base on different customer segment. Towards the end of the workshop, incubatees had to pitch their ideas and development to win government funding. The judge came from many notable public agencies. As a result of these partnerships, she was able to exploit TCDC networks to improve her business.

The first partner that she was able to explore the Department of Intellectual Property, which invited her to show the new product at the IP fair. It was the very first showcase for this recycled rubber tile in 2018. Secondly, the TCDC mentor from D.R.I.V.E. 2018 also helped connect her to ITAP. ITAP is 'an industrial technology support program for SMEs to help them meet the challenges in introducing technology-based products and processes.'<sup>256</sup> ITAP did not only provide technical expertise but also offered 50% financial support for the project budget, limited to 400,000 Baht or 11,500 Euro per project.<sup>257</sup>

Eventually, 'DeCycle' become market ready. DeCycle is a rubber tile made out of used rubber wheels, intend to support a sustainable waste management system while providing a high-quality flooring for its user. The new set of a challenge after the invention stage and production process was the selling part. Do Thai consumers ready to pay extra for an innovative product with a great value added to save the world?

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<sup>255</sup> Miss Lek, sales & marketing manager Winserve Products Co.,Ltd., interview by author, March 25, 2020, phone call (translated by author)

<sup>256</sup> 'Innovation Technology Assistance Program (iTAP),' Thailand Science Park, accessed May 12, 2020, <https://www.sciencepark.or.th/index.php/en/innovation-technology-assistance-program-itap/>.

<sup>257</sup> 'iTAP,' Thailand Science Park.

**Image 4** Decycle recycle rubber tilers



Source: the company profile was sent to the author by e-mail on April 3, 2020.

### 5.1.3 Case study 3: Mongkol kit

Mr. Man has been working in the advertising and printing industry for the past ten years. One day he decided to build his gift brand, not any typical gift but the one with added story of Thai belief. The word 'Mongkol' in Thai means auspicious. The product that he aimed to make was not ordinary gifts, but lucky charms that could bring their owners good luck. The 'sacred objects' or 'charms' has been very intertwined with Thai people's beliefs for hundreds of years.<sup>258</sup> However, if we think about traditional Thai charms, they often look old fashioned, which are not attractive among younger generations. Hence, Mr. Man wanted to come up with a new version of a sacred object that would be interesting in younger audiences.

<sup>258</sup> Thai Rath, 'The reason why people own an amulet: from believe to faith,' July 31, 2019, accessed May 22, 2020, <https://www.thairath.co.th/news/society/1624981>.

**Image 5** Soy Wax with the imprint in Thai words that mean success, wealthy, prosperous, and money



Source: 'Limited Edition, 100% Soy Wax, <https://www.facebook.com/commerce/products/2594259537280879/>, access May 12, 2020.

When he applied for D.R.I.V.E. 2018, he went there with an idea to commercialize a new generation of a sacred object. However, as he was progressing in the incubation process, then he realized one customer pain point that if he could come up with a product to deal with it this could turn into the next “big thing”. As part of the Thai tradition, when making an offering to the Buddha, gods, guardian spirits, at a temple or home, Thai people often light three incense sticks, candles, and sometimes flowers as part of their prayers. Nevertheless, a consequence of lighting incense sticks is toxic smoke and, in some cases, a carcinogen from the combustion. The Thai Public Health Ministry announced that the result of burning incense is terrible for health and could have both short-term effects such as eye irritation, sneezing, breathing difficulty as well as long-term consequences such as cancer.<sup>259</sup> This consumer insight of love-hate relationship with lighting incense sticks inspired Mr. Man to invent a new substitute product with less harmful effects for the user's health.

During the incubation process, ‘Design Thinking’ was used as a way to help incubatees formulate their ideas and develop their products or services. It was followed by a marketing class to learn marketing expert on marketing technique and Business Model Canvas to

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<sup>259</sup> Suwitcha Chaiyong, ‘Crisis vs tradition,’ February 5, 2019, accessed May 12, 2020, <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/1623814/crisis-vs-tradition>.

understand how to bring their products and services out after its creation. His area of expertise was around designed services such as coming with a marketing campaign, making artwork, and event organizing. Learning about product developing and cost-benefit analysis made him feel like going to elementary school once again. However, he believed that the knowledge he gained from this incubation program was so valuable that it could be applied to any other businesses as well.

On the showcase day, Mr. Man managed to make a mockup of his innovative cold incense that used the evaporation technique instead of the exhaustion. An innovative cold incense could be a life-saving product and a new way to pray, especially for those with allergies. It also did not carry carcinogens that came with regular incense sticks. The response from the market was beyond his expectation, everybody want to get a hold of this product. However, what stopped him from celebrating this special moment was that he realized that bringing this cold incense to life was not that simple. Moreover, he had overlooked this innovative solution's overall production cost and set the price the for the product.

His first step was to develop a mockup into a prototype piece. He reached out to ITAP, an agency that gives an industrial technology support program for SMEs, whom he met from the D.R.I.V.E. 2018 pitching. Luckily, they were willing to fund this project. Nevertheless, after a year of product development, it was still tricky to come out with the right price for this masterpiece, since many parts of this cold incense needed to be imported from aboard. Mr. Man had to faces the challenge of identifying the uniqueness of his product over others substitute product, and concluded that it would be too risky to be manufacture it in China and at risk of the idea being stolen, even though he already registered for patent and trademark in Thailand, but this regulation would not be able to have any control over on the international level. Thailand was still lacking a strong supply chain to produce an electronic product within the country. The inventor had to outsource the manufacturing electronic board production, mostly in Taiwan or China. He recognized that the market for this innovative product could be niche, from the high production cost. However, his challenge was his intention of not selling a low-turnover rate product and being over-reliance on Chinese production. Otherwise, this new innovative product could lose its glamor and disappear from the market. Although he might already get the prototype of this million-dollar idea, however, he was still struggling with how to sustain commercialization of this new product.

**Image 6** The prototype version of the cold incense



Sources: 'The prototype version of the cold incense,' Facebook Voice TV,

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=10158154898874848>, access May 12, 2020

<https://www.facebook.com/DibdeeMongkolkit/photos/a.862059317295930/1335713173263873> access May 12, 2020

**Figure 3** Comparative table on selected incubatees for case study

	32 Things	DeCycle	Mongkol kit
Origin	An illustrator  Become creative entrepreneur in 2019	Founded the construction chemicals business 15 years ago  Launch DeCycle in 2019	Adverting and printing industry for the past ten years  Lunch Mongkol kit in 2019
Industry	Art and craft	Construction chemical/ material	Struck in prototype stage for the cold incense  Adverting and printing industry/ Souvenir
Stage of the company	Idea generation	Business Transformation	Business Transformation
Current stage of the new product	Selling at ICON Siam/ Online platform	Selling at major construction retail store in Bangkok	In the prototype phase
Relationship with TCDC	Workshop: Creative Startup 2019 by TCDC Chiang Mai  Exhibition: Chiang Mai Design Week 2019  Exhibition: Bangkok design Week 2019  Workshop: Creative Business Workshop 2020 by TCDC Chiang Mai	Business consulted D.R.I.V.E. 2018  Exhibition: Change SMEs 2018, IP fair	TCDC Member since the early 2000s  Seminar: many  Workshop: D.R.I.V.E. 2018  Exhibition: Change SMEs 2018, IP fair
Network gain from the incubator	Recommendation for suppliers  Business matching: sell in major department store	Innovation and Technology Assistance Program (ITAP)  Department of Intellectual Property (DIP)  Invitation to show The material library	Innovation and Technology Assistance Program (ITAP)  Department of Intellectual Property (DIP)
Funding	None	Receive funding from ITAP	Receive funding from ITAP

### 5.1.4 Discussion

These three case studies shown different outcome that TCDC incubatees has experienced. To measure the impact on incubatees, the framework of ‘a conceptual framework identifying the performance measures of business practice within business incubators’ developed by Voisey et al will be applied.<sup>260</sup> This specific framework was selected because of it came from the study on typical business incubation similar to the TCDC. The criteria assortment to evaluate the impact were separated into hard measurement and soft measurement. The hard measurement or ‘measuring success within such projects in statistical terms,’ includes sales turnover, profitability, growth of enterprise.<sup>261</sup> The criteria such as developing a prototype and launching a new product would be included in the hard measure factor.

#### Hard measurement

**The growth of enterprise** was visible in two sample cases include DeCycle and 32 Things. The case of DeCycle, this product sprang out of a long-established firm that switched from being a trader to a producer of this innovative product which can be found in the major construction retail shop in Bangkok today. Whereas the case of 32 Things was the growth from almost nothing which lead to the next factor which is increasing **profitability** of a firm. Because of the TCDC incubation workshop, that this handcrafted product could be sold like a hot cakes in Bangkok Design Week 2020.<sup>262</sup> These sales happened as a result of the support to help turn a conceptual idea into a product and provide a platform for its incubatees to have access to the market. Nonetheless, not all new innovative products would get commercialize for several reasons. However, for SMEs to experience **product development or come up with a prototype**, it would allow them to understand the process and have better chance when there is an opportunity. Some incubatees like the Mongkol kit might still stuck in the prototype phase. Even thought it could answer customer pain point, however, this execution might not yet be the best solution for this matter.

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<sup>260</sup> Voisey, et al., ‘The measurement of success,’ 465.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid, 465.

<sup>262</sup> Pun, 32 Things, interview by author, April 2, 2020, phone call (translated by author)

## Soft measurement

There could be an additional outcome other than measurable factor, soft measure is a factor that not as visible but exists. This includes increased professionalism, improved business skills, increased confidence in self and business, increased productive networking, positive publicity, access to financial support and access to market.<sup>263</sup> The gain in these soft measures were very apparent in most of the incubatees feedback, not only in the three case studies that were chosen, but also from the other four interviewers.

First, since many interviewed incubatees were either a new startup with little business knowledge or the firm that operated their business for a very long time and needed to freshen up their perspective. Many were impressed with the business support they got from TCDC especially from the expert in the field. They had noticed that they had **improved their business skills** as a result of the incubation process, for example:

*'TCDC has helped me to understand the marketing concept and taught me to have a better understanding of who are my consumers. Then, if I want to communicate about my product, what factors should I keep in mind. This knowledge help sharpen my communication message.'* - Business B

Many respondents have mentioned tools such as Business Model Canvas and marketing tools, both online & offline, that they had learned from the training which were applicable to their businesses.

Next, it was not just knowledge that these incubatees gained from the incubation workshops. Nevertheless, it was the **increased confidence in self and business** that incubatees developed after the hands-on training and first-hand experience, such as exposure to the market from the market trials opportunities, which they valued:

*'I have learned a lot since I have never been in product development circle or know how to do marketing for commercial goods... ...I'm sure that I can use this knowledge and this way of thinking in the future.'* - Business E

*'I think the knowledge I gained from D.R.I.V.E. was not useless even if I could not launch my new innovative product just yet. What I got from the program was the new way of thinking that, I'm certain, is adaptable to other products. After my experience*

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<sup>263</sup> Ibid, 456.

*in the incubation program, I believe I have become more resilient to the upcoming challenge.* ' - Business B

One way to measure confidence was to see who one dealing with challenging situation. It seemed that TCDC has helped equip these incubatees with the needed knowledge and skills to have confidence in doing business even in difficult time.

Third, **increased productive networking** was one of the most beneficial aspects that many incubatees agree with. These skills are something that one's could gain on their own with several trials and errors, but TCDC has helped offered some shortcuts from linking the expert in the field with these incubatees. By attending an incubation program, it allowed them to have opportunities to access the needed support, whether it was the financial support or link to the other resources such as research center, build up a prototype piece, or even connect to suppliers.

*'TCDC did not hold back at all when it comes to sharing their network partner. This is how I get to know my supplier.* ' – Business A

*'I participated in 'Design Incubation,' which helped design new packaging for me. It was a program that teams up a junior designer with the senior designer to help supervise the work. The good thing about this program is that I got a cheap design that reflected my needs.* ' – Business G

Most of the interviews indicated that the TCDC network was a very supportive partner, as suggested by the following quotations:

*'I have received funding from ITAP after seeing my prototype piece in one of the TCDC events.* ' – Business E

*'At the end of the incubation workshop, incubatees were required to pitch their updated business plan to a judging panel. These judges were representatives from various public organizations such as the Department of Intellectual Property, which I got to exchange my name card with after the presentation* ' – Business D

Fifth, many interviewers expressed their gratitude to the exhibition organized by TCDC since it drew attention from the press and gave them the opportunity to receive **positive publicity**. Many interviewees ended up receiving free media coverage on their product.

*'The good thing is that TCDC invited many presses to join the product showcase exhibition. As a result, I have got a lot of free press coverage from this event.' – Business B*

*'This is such a good start for me. After Chiang Mai Design Week, I got to interview with many well-known presses.' – Business A*

Other than free media coverage some companies even got an invitation to show their innovative material in the Material library in TCDC. This was an opportunity for material that was made in Thailand to be shown in the material library, Material ConneXion®, around the world.<sup>264</sup>

Sixth, not all incubatees received the same financial benefit, since it was upon the judgment of *upperground* institutions. However, with the help of the TCDC to link the incubatees with the right institution, this would allowed them to have **access to financial support**.

*'TCDC also helped connected me to ITAP, which was the first time I have ever received a grant from the government... ...This budget could be used to hire a consultant or for product research and development.' – Business D*

Last, was the support for incubatees to have **access to the market**. All incubatees who participated in D.R.I.V.E. 2018 would have a chance for market trials through an exhibition held by TCDC affiliated partners such as 'CHANGE SMEs 2018' and 'IP Fair 2018' organized by the Department of Intellectual property. While some incubatees saw this opportunity to close sales on their new innovative product or services, some only saw it as an opportunity to showcase their new prototype and reap the benefits of the consumer feedback.

*'On the showcase day of IP fair, I finally came up with my product prototype. I have got incredible feedback. Everybody loved it.' – Business E*

*'I am glad that I got to showcase my product at Icon Siam, which helps support our brand image even if it did not lead to any sales yet.' – Business C*

Even though Business C got a chance to sell their product in one of the largest shopping malls in Thailand, they did not expect to make a substantial profit from this marketplace. It was an opportunity that comes with a price. This collaboration would allowed the exploiting creativity by this *upperground*, in the form of the large retail actors, to profit from the work

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<sup>264</sup> 'Material ConneXion® Bangkok,' Material Connexion, accessed May 20, 2020, <https://www.materialconnexion.com/bangkok/>

of the creative class. Nevertheless, in turn, this would allow more exposure of their work to the public.

These workshops aimed to show incubatees the possible impact that changes can contribute to their business. To measure the impact of a creative business incubator on its incubatees there was more than just a hard measure factor there was also a soft measure. While the soft measure can be harder to measure, but still exists. These could be the social capital that incubatees gain from being incubated by the TCDC. The gain in knowledge and network that incubatees received could be a long-lasting impact that will remain even after the incubation process is over. As a result of the TCDC incubation program, a new business was launched, a new innovative product was introduced to the market, and caused significant business transformation. Besides, a business could become more resilient to unexpected change, adjust their mindset, be inspired by possible alternatives, and appreciated the use of designers to help create value-added products. These soft criteria should not be overlooked when measuring the effect that incubatees receive from an incubation process.

## 5.2 The creative industries discourse in Bangkok

The goal of the TCDC is to support creative entrepreneurs to develop a new products and services with value added that came from the use of their knowledge and skill combine with cultural assets.<sup>265</sup> In reality there are many challenges that the Thai SMEs have to face while trying to endure in the creative economy. From the nature of SMEs that often have operative issue such as cash flow and production to the larger set of obstacles of the national infrastructure.

The first threat that these incubatees faced was the experience related to the **cash flow**. Almost all of the interviewees expressed that they did not have enough time to invest in developing a new business plan, let along introducing new products or services. Hence, they need to prioritise their cash flow and focus on their existing business that could give them profit straight away, over investing their time and effort on something new.

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<sup>265</sup> Howkins, 'Developing Thailand's,' 20.

*'The development of this product took so long because I still have to run my main business. Since this is a family business, I pretty much have to handle everything by myself.'* – Business G

*'I have got a prototype product already, but have not commercialized it yet... Since this next step would require putting in more capital and time. I have to focus on selling what I currently have because cash flow is very essential for my business.'* – Business B

It was shown that a common issue is that constrained firms are very sensitive to cash flow.<sup>266</sup> Moreover, SMEs often have to pay a higher interest rate than other firms with abundant resources.<sup>267</sup> For SMEs to work under limited resources, it can be hard for them to spare time for any business development. Regarding the challenge to access capital, the TCDC partnered with banks in the past, however, these partnerships only happen occasionally. Nonetheless, for those who had incubation with TCDC are perhaps have a better credit than the others, since these incubatees successfully beat other applicants in order to get to incubate with TCDC.

The next interviewee who was inspired by products made of recycled materials, had to wait for almost ten years for the right moment to execute their idea. The turning point for this business happened right after business consultation section with TCDC expert.

*'I think that now the market is ready for this innovative product. It took me two more years in order to develop both design and quality to get it right.'* – Business D

In this case, it took Business D almost twelve years from the first moment she was inspired by recycled material for construction and dedicated two more years in research and development before this innovative product could come out. Startup often could not estimate how long it would take before a new product or service could make profit. The TCDC could step in to educate these creative entrepreneurs through business consult and workshop. However, ultimately it was the assessment that business owners had to make whether or not to make a move after learning about the drawback and benefit.

The next issue is **high production cost** in producing a new innovative product.

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<sup>266</sup> Klaas Mulier, Koen Schoors, and Bruno Merlevede, 'Investment-cash flow sensitivity and financial constraints: Evidence from unquoted European SMEs,' *Journal of Banking & Finance*, Vol. 73, (2016): 182-197, 192.

<sup>267</sup> Mulier, Schoors, and Merlevede, 'Investment-cash flow sensitivity.' 192.

*'I have tried to work on this product for a year, but I cannot set the price yet since most of the electronic parts have to be imported from China. I think the strength of my product is not strong enough, and somebody could try to copy it since the mechanism is not very complicated.' – Business E*

*'I was struggling with the cost to produce my new product since it has to be manufactured aboard with a very high minimum unit.' - Business B*

The high production costs came from all the step it takes to come up with a new product, from investing in research and development to the manufacturing cost. While some of these incubatees could get support from TCDC partners in the area such as scientific research and the building a mockup. Nonetheless, when it comes to manufacturing the new product, SMEs will have to be the one to invest. It is possible to build a mockup of electronic products in Thailand. However, when it comes to mass manufacturing these goods, there are almost no available service in the country. Even though in 2018, Thailand exported electronic and integrated circuits at the value of 8,332 million USD, when a Thai company wants to produce an electronic product, it has to outsource the production to China or Taiwan.<sup>268</sup> Some interviewees also raised their concerns about the manufacturer's reliability, whether or not they might try to copy their innovative idea. Recommended from Phongsathorn D.R.I.V.E. 2018's project director was that the new startup should not limit their supply chain within the border of one county.<sup>269</sup> Though, they should look how they can benefit from the existing global supply chain linkage. However, for firms to be able to seek for an alternative supply chain aboard it would lead back to challenge of limited resources.

The problem of high production cost is also extended to the cost of hand making craft.

*'This is a circular economy problem that production cost is very expensive. The cost was so high to the point that I cannot market the product. The cost of production was very expensive since the material has to be to prepare one by one.' – Business C*

First of all, we have to recognize that the equilibrium price of one product could be vary depending on supply and demand. In this case, the high production costs came from the work

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<sup>268</sup> 'Thailand Investment Review,' Thailand Board of Investment, February 2019, accessed June 20, 2020, 11. [http://www.boi.go.th/upload/content/TIR\\_Newsletter\\_February2019\\_AW\\_5c908cc7bf8e5.pdf](http://www.boi.go.th/upload/content/TIR_Newsletter_February2019_AW_5c908cc7bf8e5.pdf)

<sup>269</sup> Phongsathorn Laiadon, D.R.I.V.E. 2018's project director, interview by author, April 20, 2020, phone interview (translated by author)

hours needed to be put into using the recycle material, which cannot be reduced if they wanted to use this type of material. Thus, the time that is taken to make these products has pushed the selling price of a recycle product above the market price. Solution on this matter could be that the entrepreneurs need to find the way to communicate this added value to the consumer. The circular economy carries its own set of added value from its ability to reduce negative environmental impacts and other unquantifiable effects beyond economic measurement.<sup>270</sup> Moreover, the TCDC has organized classes and workshops on marketing techniques, to help train its incubatees on how to convince the market to appreciate the added values in the creative economy aim to offers. However, not all incubatees could applied these knowledges in reality.

The issue of new innovative products with added values led to the next challenge of the **market readiness**. The innovative products or services often come in a higher price range to offset the high research and development and the marketing costs. However, the Thai consumer might not appreciate these extra benefits or might not have sufficient purchasing power for products in this new segment.

*‘Since a recycled product is not cheap Thai market might not ready to pay for this extra benefit. However, last year a foreign investor approached me asking to buy the know-how of this product, but I was not ready to sell at that point.’* – Business D

Many businesses in the creative industries in Bangkok still struggle to find the right customer for the new innovative product or services. In order to handle the situation of niche market, Thai businesses might have to keep their eyes open for any possibility outside of the country as much as for the local market. The TCDC have aimed to fill up this gap by offer an opportunity for businesses to exhibit their product in an international exhibition such as the International Innovative Craft Fair, ‘IP Fair 2018’ by the Department of Intellectual property, and others.<sup>271</sup> In addition they also support the Thai SMEs to access international market from partnering with the Department of International Trade Promotion.

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<sup>270</sup> Pejvak Oghazi, and Rana Mostaghel, ‘Circular Business Model Challenges and Lessons Learned—An Industrial Perspective,’ *Sustainability*, 10, 739 (2018): 16

<sup>271</sup> TCDC, ‘Exhibition: International Innovative Craft Fair (IICF) 2014,’ accessed July 15, 2020 <http://www.tcdc.or.th/exhibition/17745/?lang=th>

Last but not least some interviewees have raised their concern on the challenge to create **sustainable businesses** in the long run.

*'My goal is not that I want my product to become a mass product. However, there should be some minimum volume with a decent turnover rate. But now, with the advantage of this product that only serves the high purchasing power segment, it might take two years or more before they might return and purchase a new one. I have to look for an alternative way to increase the repurchasing order. '* - Business E

There were many challenges that these incubatees had pointed out. First, there might be no sustainable way for innovative product within a global context where the new product life cycle become shorter and shorter. Second, Design Thinking could help sharpen incubatees idea and test their idea over and over again. Otherwise incubatees might end up producing just another expensive innovative product that can easily find a substitute product with slightly different feature in the market. Last, the ability to able to come up with the next big thing is not be a transferable knowledge. An incubator could only inspire and show how to bring idea into life.

### 5.3 Summary

The overall evaluation from the sample group shows that majority of incubatees have positive feedback with the TCDC. Since the TCDC is aware of the struggles and challenges that incubatees have experienced, it has organized several activities that aim to help fill those needs. Based on the framework of the three values of an incubator discussed in the previous chapter, the TCDC has provided many needed resources for its incubatees from infrastructure, business support, and networks., From the data gathered in the interviewing process it seems that the latter two factors have helped support incubatees tremendously. The TCDC workshops had to show incubatees on the possible impact that change can contribute to their business. While help link incubatees to the *upperground* resource to help support incubatees in the area that might be out of the TCDC expertise. In this *middleground* that the TCDC has created, it would also allow SMEs, startup, and the creative class to connect, allowing for an organic relationship such as knowledge transfer and an idea to accelerate. Additionally, it also organizes a business consultation section to help identify the unique challenges of each incubatees and give some recommendations to overcome them. However, we have to noted that the impact of the TCDC consultation section or workshop could be restricted to the limited time and budget to delve into a particular business.

Nonetheless, in the creative industries, discourse in Bangkok had reviewed some challenges that incubatees had experienced. Some difficulties seem to be bigger than the scope of a creative business incubator, and are based on the county's structural problems. The limited supply chain in Thailand and the market readiness have prevented many businesses from commercializing their prototype innovations. These incubatees might have to change their mindset from their limited aim to produce in Thailand and look for any possibility of the global supply chain and outsource if available, then pay more attention to developing their marketing tactic to establish themselves as a pioneer in their industries. However, high ambition might never come true if these small firms did not have enough resources, to begin with. A small firm has to put all of their effort into the existing businesses that nourish their primary income source. This is a vicious cycle that a small enterprise and startup has to experience before earning a spot in this competitive market.

Since the most extended incubation workshop lasts less than a year-long, the support from TCDC offers might not be sufficient for all types of businesses, especially for business that requires more time for research and development. The TCDC is an excellent place for those interested in integrated art and design into their products or services or for the creative class that is still lacking for the entrepreneur's mindset and wanted to further up their knowledge in this matter. However, these businesses that focus on redesigning packaging and give a new life to an existing product might not be enough to increase country competitiveness according to the TCDC plan in the long run.

## Chapter 6: Conclusion

The analysis done in this research shows that the establishment of the TCDC has contributed to the creation of a fertile soil for creativity in Bangkok. The space of the middleground is needed to foster the creative process.<sup>272</sup> This last chapter will start by concluding the three-value preposition of an incubator. Followed by answering the main research question on the role of creative business incubator in the creative economy by filling the *middleground* gap. Then the impact of business incubator on its incubatees business is assessed. The chapter ends with limitations and recommendations for further research.

### 6.1 The three-value prepositions of business incubator

Despite the political challenges that TCDC, as a public institution, has faced over the 15 years, the TCDC has done an excellent job providing intellectual entertainment and playfields that helped the creative class and businesses to become prosperous organizations in the creative economy. The value of a business incubator was developed based on the needs of the user.<sup>273</sup> The three-value proposition of infrastructure, business support, and the network is the latest version of a business incubator.

*Infrastructure* – the TCDC, unlike the other incubators, did not incubate incubatees on-site. However, it has provided facilities that could support the businesses, such as meeting rooms, reception services, an auditorium, a makerspace, and parking spaces, for its user. Besides, the TCDC also provided knowledge-based resources such as resource centers that are filled with resources related to creativity and design, and the material and a design library with more than 8,000 material samples from all over the world. The TCDC's main office is now located in the Grand Postal Building in Bangkok. Nonetheless, the TCDC also has its network in form of main branches in TCDC Khonkaen, TCDC Chiang Mai, and 30 branches of mini-TCDCs partnering regional universities throughout the country.<sup>274</sup>

*Business support* – Throughout the year, the TCDC has organized a number of educational programs and business support programs which were designed specifically for particular users. For instance, the business consultation section or 'Creative Business Service' is a

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<sup>272</sup> Cohendet, Grandadam, and Simon, 'Rethinking urban creativity' 158.

<sup>273</sup> Bruneel, et al., 'The Evolution of Business Incubators.' 110.

<sup>274</sup> 'miniTCDC,' TCDC, accessed June 2,2020, <https://web.tcdc.or.th/th/contactus/mini>.

popular program aimed at supporting SMEs, designers, or the public to have access to business and design consultation at a cheaper rate than private consulting firms.<sup>275</sup> Moreover, the TCDC also organized exhibitions, seminars, extended incubation workshops to educate its incubatees from the ideation to the production and commercialization process, using tools such as Design Thinking, Service Design, and Design Innovation process.

*Access to Network* – One of the most essential factors that an incubator could provide for its incubatees is access to a network. The network refers to the ability that TCDC could help its incubatees connect to potential customers, suppliers, technology partners, and investors.<sup>276</sup> TCDC has been partners with many private and public institutions that allow its incubatees to have access to resources such as research labs, producing a prototype production, and funding. Furthermore, the TCDC has also created a platform for incubatees to access the market and to organize business matching between creative entrepreneurs and a big retail company. This link would have been almost impossible without the support from a middleground institution like the TCDC to help to bridge these different parties.

## 6.2 Filling up the missing *middleground* gap

A creative business incubator plays an important role in support to the growth of a creative city. The missing gap that exists in Thailand was that the talented individuals, startup companies, creatives, the so called *underground*, could not access support from the government institutions, banks, or big businesses, the *upperground*. The establishment of the TCDC has helped foster this *middleground* space that could link up these two levels in the creative space that would never have crossed paths on their own.

This is why this thesis refers to the network as an essential value proposition of an incubator. Some examples of *middleground* spaces that TCDC has created include inviting the experts in the field to become guest speakers on a specialized topics, inviting the representatives from the other public institutions to become part of the judge panels when incubatees pitch their ideas of new products or services, or even organizing festivals like Bangkok Design Week to creative space for integration for different layers of the city. This is how an incubator could be the bridge to link the *underground* to the formal *upperground* institutions that have ability to support and exploit the new ideas and find new users for new creations. These platforms

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<sup>275</sup> TCDC, *Annual report 2018*, 46.

<sup>276</sup> Bruneel, et al., 'The Evolution of Business Incubators,' 112.

were created to build mutual trust between the different layers of the creative city in order to build long-lasting relationships. Additionally, the TCDC not only help to connect the different layers of the city but also provided space for *underground* individuals to interact and explore creative ideas. This is how a creative business incubator can contribute to the growth of a creative city.

### **6.3 Impact on incubatees' businesses**

An opportunity to be equipped with the necessary business skills and to gain connections makes it more likely that incubatees can survive and prosper in the long run. This thesis has emphasized that there is more than just hard measuring or a measurement of success in statistical terms such as the amount of profit or number of new products or services, which can be used to evaluate the result of an incubation process. Although soft measurement may be more difficult it is not impossible to apply. Soft measurement criteria include improved business skills, increased confidence in themselves and their businesses, increased productive networking, positive publicity, access to financial services, and access to the market. These could be social capital that incubatees gained from being incubated by the TCDC. Gains in knowledge and extended networks could have long-lasting impact, which will remain even after incubation process is over.

The assessment of the impact on incubatees was based on interviews with seven businesses that were incubated by the TCDC in the past two years in 2018-2019. As a result of the TCDC's incubation programs, new businesses were launched, new innovative products were introduced to the market, and significant business transformations were realized. Besides, businesses could become more resilient to unexpected changes, change their mindset, become inspired by possible alternatives, and appreciate the use of designers to help to create value-added products. Soft criteria are often ignored since there are not as tangible as the sales figures of new products, but these should not be overlooked when measuring the positive effects that incubatees gain from an incubation process.

This study has not only discovered findings on the positive impact from incubation, but has also found some challenges TCDC incubatees in incubation experienced.

- a) The primary threat that these incubatees had was the experience related to the **cash flow** of their company.

- b) **Lacking time and continuity** of new products or services was discussed consistently in almost all interviewers. Consequently, incubatees often focused more on their original businesses instead of inverting something new.
- c) The issue of **high production costs** was due to lack of economies of scale and a lack of a robust product ecosystem in Thailand that could not turn an innovative prototype into a commercial product.
- d) **Sustainability of their businesses in the long run** in what might seem to be a very niche market.

Last, even the most extended incubation workshop from TCDC lasts less than one year, the support that this incubator offers might not be sufficient for all types of businesses. The TCDC is an excellent place for those interested in integrated art and design into their products or services or for the creative class that is still lacking for the entrepreneur's mindset and wanted to further up their knowledge in this matter. However, for businesses that require more time and support in research and development of a new product or services, the TCDC cannot support them directly. It can only help refer those businesses to the other institution. So, for a creative business incubator that can only support incremental change, the goal to increase country competitiveness, in the long run, seems to be out of reach.

#### 6.4 Implications

The implication of this research is giving a valuable insight into the creative economy in Thailand, along with the role of the TCDC as the *middleground* layer of creative city that supports exploration and exploitation to happen in Bangkok and Chiang Mai. The TCDC could be the case to show the ability of the rich *middleground* in supporting the emergence of creativity in the city, as well as to shed light on the common struggles that business startups experience in the creative economy. Moreover, it helps to understand impact on incubatees that went through incubation process. Last, TCDC and policy makers could use this work to reflect on what this institution has done right and in what areas it might need to pay more attention to improve their work.

#### 6.5 Limitation and Further Research

Since this study was completed as qualitative research with limited size, only seven incubatees and two representatives from TCDC were interviewed. It is, therefore, not possible to generalize these findings, which is also not the main intention of the author.

The goal of this research was to understand the role of a creative business incubator in support of the growth of the creative economy while shedding some light on the field of the creative industry in a developing country like Thailand. In addition, to understand the broader implication of the impact that TCDC had on the incubatees. It also showed how political instability had an impact on a particular institution of the creative industry. The findings of this research are not representative of other creative business incubators because of the unique approach TCDC took. Moreover, because of this study's method, based on semi-structured interviews, it could easily lead to a bias when the author was analyzing the interviewed data.

A recommendation for future research is to get more accurate results on the role of the incubator, and its impact on incubatees, a larger pool of data is needed. It would be interesting to conduct quantitative and qualitative research to measure the impact of both hard and soft measures on incubates, and to understand what incubatees have gained from the incubation process in both the short and long-run.

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### ***In Thai***

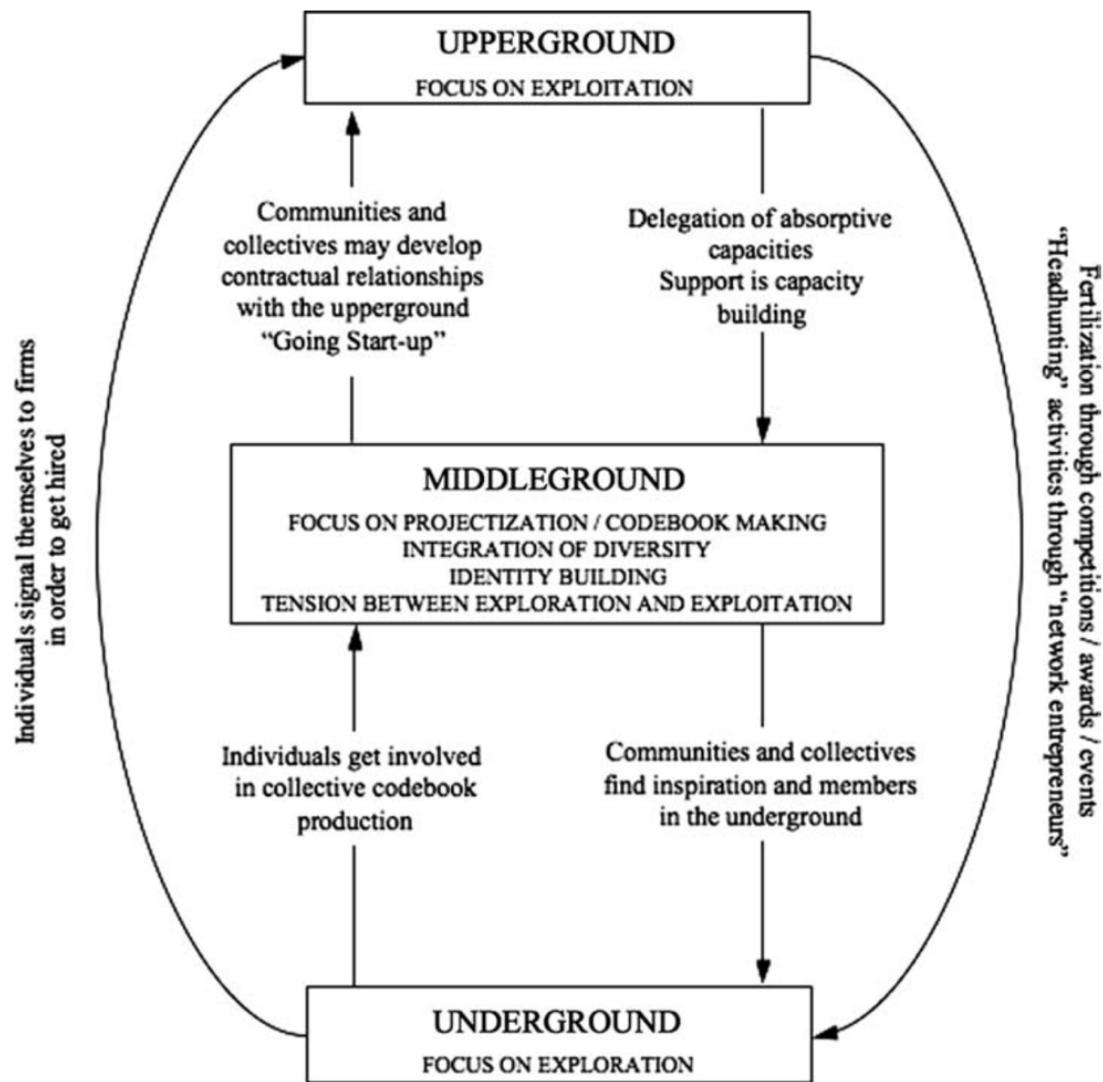
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## Appendix

### Appendix A

The anatomy of the creative city by Cohendet et al.



Source: Patrick Cohendet, David Grandadam, and Laurent Simon, 'The Anatomy of the Creative City,' *Industry and Innovation*, 17:1, (2010): 91-111, 100.

## Appendix B

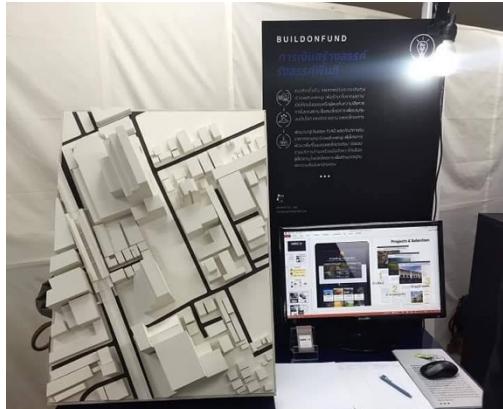
Overview if incubatees firm the sample

### Company name: CK Wood Products Co., Ltd.



A 30 years old business in a lumber mill that can offer you everything related to lumber from a door frame, window frame, door, flooring, and furniture set. The new project of CW Wood is to utilize sawdust waste in the factory into an eco-friendly cat litter.

### Company name: Buildon Co., Ltd,



A social enterprise that aims to preserve local heritage by creating a platform that works as a bridge between investor or donor and a local community that needs support. Buildon would help assess each community and identified their needs while also give consultation in area such as finance and architecture.

### Company name: Dibdee Co., Ltd., (Mongkol Kit)



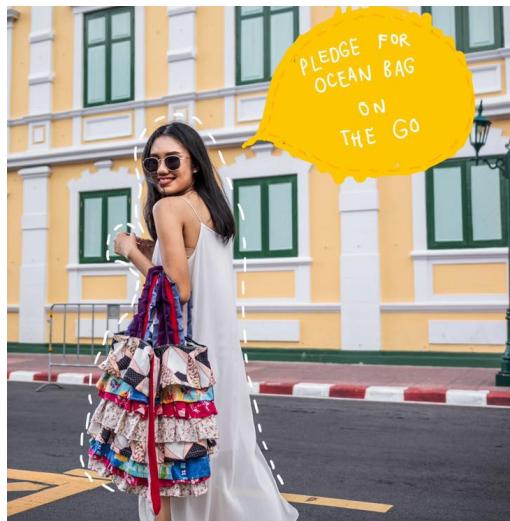
A company aims to produce an extortional gift with an added story of Thais belief, a new generation of a sacred object. This company is developing a cold incense, a new way to pray, that uses the evaporation technique instead of the exhaust.

### Company name: Wintrade Products Co.,Ltd.



Wintrade Products is technically a company with expertise in the construction chemical products, hence waterproof chemical for buildings maintenance for the past 15 years. Until recently, the company has introduced DeCycle, a rubber tile made out of used rubber wheels, to support a sustainable waste management system while providing a high-quality flooring for its user.

### Company name: Dress to Dream



This project belongs to a group of young entrepreneurs who wanted to start a social enterprise business. The first product is Pledge for Ocean Bag. It is a bag made out of 100% used clothes, with the aim to reduce landfill waste that might end up in the ocean and give a new life to an old cloth.

### Company name: Flashpacker Part., Ltd.



A cosmetic wholesaler that sell both famous Korean cosmetic and skin care and their own manufacturing brand. Later turned into a tech startup company. Flashpacker is the name of the new product that remains in the prototype stage. This device supposed to be able to analyze user skin health and send the information to an application. So, customer can a better take care of their skin according to the personalized result.

## Company name: 32 Things



An illustrator that turn into a creative entrepreneur. 32 Things is a creepy cute handmade goods, that offer from set of ceramic of a human body part such as brain, eyes, teeth, lung, stomach, and vagina, to a heart shape ring.

## Appendix C

### Training detail for Creative Startup 2019

First time | 29-31 March 2019 | Exploration

ครั้งที่ 1 | 29-31 มีนาคม 2562 | Exploration

ศุกร์ที่ 29 : ทำความรู้จัก Friday 29 : Get to know

09.30 - 10.00	ลงทะเบียน Register
10.00 - 10.15	ผู้จัดการโครงการ แนะนำโครงการ และกิจกรรมโดยภาพรวม Introduction to the program
10.15 - 12.00	วิทยากรทั้ง 2 ที่มี แนะนำตัว การทำงาน ภารกิจของต่อการออกแบบ Introduction on work and perception of design
12.00 - 13.00	พัก (1 ชั่วโมง) 1 hour break
13.00 - 14.45	Incubatees presenting about themselves on personal interest and dream in doing business (5 min) ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม 15 คน(คนละ 5 นาที) แนะนำตัว / ความสนใจที่ส่วนตัว / ความฝันในวงการธุรกิจ (ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรมเตรียม PDF Presentation ล่วงหน้า)
14.45 - 15.00	พัก (15 นาที) 15 min break
15.00 - 16.45	Incubatees presenting about themselves on personal interest and dream in doing business (5 min) ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม 15 คน(คนละ 5 นาที) แนะนำตัว / ความสนใจที่ส่วนตัว / ความฝันในวงการธุรกิจ (ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรมเตรียม PDF Presentation ล่วงหน้า)
16.45 - 17.00	Short presentation on: What ideas came from? by o-d-a / conclusion of the first day / give assignment บรรยายโดย : “โดยในกิจกรรมนี้ ให้เดาในกิจกรรมแบบมาจากไหน โดย o-d-a / วิทยากรสรุปกิจกรรมวันที่ 1 / แจกการบ้าน

\*การบ้าน : ให้ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม “น้ำของน้ำค้างสตังค์ที่สามารถยกให้ความสนใจได้ความสนใจของคุณมากที่สุด(ยกเว้นโทรศัพท์มือถือ)” เพื่อนำมาพูดคุยกันในวันรุ่งขึ้น  
\*Assignment: Select one thing that I can explain your recent interest(except a phone) for tomorrow discussion

เสาร์ที่ 30 : สำรวจและสังเกต(จะทำของให้มันนุ่มนิ่ม ต้องศึกษาความเป็นมนุษย์ก่อน) Saturday 30 : Investigate and observe

09.30 - 10.00	ลงทะเบียน Register
10.00 - 11.00	Presentation on: Observation for design by o-d-a บรรยาย : การสังเกต เพื่อห่วงผล เนื่องจากออกแบบ (Observation) โดย o-d-a
11.00 - 12.00	Presentation on: Observation for design by Satawat บรรยาย : การสังเกต เพื่อห่วงผล เนื่องจากออกแบบ (Observation) โดย ศศวรรษ
12.00 - 13.00	พัก (1 ชั่วโมง) 1 hour break
13.00 - 14.45	The incubatees present their assignment and discuss about it ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม นำเสนอที่เดียวมามา นำเสนอความสนใจส่วนตัว และร่วมพูดคุยกัน
14.45 - 15.00	พัก (15 นาที) 15 min break
15.00 - 16.45	The incubatees present their assignment and discuss about it ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม นำเสนอที่เดียวมามา นำเสนอความสนใจส่วนตัว และร่วมพูดคุยกัน
16.45 - 17.00	Short presentation on: What if I don't have a new idea by o-d-a / conclusion of the day/ give assignment บรรยายโดย : “คิดตามไม่ออกากยังไง” โดย o-d-a / วิทยากรสรุปกิจกรรมวันที่ 2 / แจกการบ้าน

\*การบ้าน : ให้ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม “เลือกภาพ ‘ผลงานของคนอื่น’ ที่เรารักมา 3 งาน ตามจิตใจส่วนตัว” เพื่อนำมาพูดคุยกันในวันรุ่งขึ้น  
\*Assignment: Select 3 piece of art that you like for tomorrow discussion

อาทิตย์ที่ 30 : ทำความเข้าใจ Sunday 31 : Understanding

09.30 - 10.00	ลงทะเบียน Register
10.00 - 11.00	Presentation on: Human centred design by Satawat บรรยาย : การออกแบบที่มนุษย์เป็นจุดศูนย์กลาง (Human Center Design) โดย ศศวรรษ
11.00 - 12.00	Presentation on: Human centred design by o-d-a บรรยาย : การออกแบบที่มนุษย์เป็นจุดศูนย์กลาง (Human Center Design) โดย o-d-a
12.00 - 13.00	พัก (1 ชั่วโมง) 1 hour break
13.00 - 14.45	The incubatees present their assignment and discuss about it ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม นำเสนอที่เดียวมามา นำเสนอความสนใจส่วนตัว และร่วมพูดคุยกัน
14.45 - 15.00	พัก (15 นาที) 15 min break
15.00 - 16.45	The incubatees present their assignment and discuss about it ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม นำเสนอที่เดียวมามา นำเสนอความสนใจส่วนตัว และร่วมพูดคุยกัน
16.45 - 17.00	Short presentation on: What to do when you don't have a clear idea by o-d-a / conclusion of the day/ give assignment บรรยายโดย : “โดยจะจัดกิจกรรม “มีชุดเจนท์อย่างเรา” โดย o-d-a / วิทยากรสรุปกิจกรรมวันที่ 3 / แจกการบ้าน

\*การบ้าน : ให้ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม “เขียนแผนความสนใจของตัวเองในเรื่องธุรกิจ และงานออกแบบที่อยากรู้” เพื่อนำมาพูดคุยกันในเดือนเมษายน

\*Assignment: Write your business model and the work you want to design to discuss it next month

บรรยาย(Lecture)

กิจกรรม(Workshop)

ลงพื้นที่(Field Trip)

\*หมายเหตุ : ตารางกิจกรรมอาจมีการเปลี่ยนแปลงหรือปรับปรุงในภายหลัง

Second | 26-28 April 2019 | Creation  
ครั้งที่ 2 | 26-28 เมษายน 2562 | Creation

\*Homework before the workshop this month

\*การบ้าน ก่อนเริ่มกิจกรรมในเดือนนี้

: แผนธุรกิจ (Business Canvas)

: แนวทางการออกแบบผลิตภัณฑ์ใหม่ของแต่ละคน (Design Concept / Sketch Design)

ศุกร์ที่ 26 : มองธุรกิจ Friday 26: Business vision

09.30 - 10.00	ลงทะเบียน Register
10.00 - 12.00	แนะนำแผนการทําธุรกิจ ช่องทางการขาย และโอกาสทางธุรกิจ : Trade Fair / Consignment / Retail <b>Business guide on distribution Channel and business opportunities</b>
12.00 - 13.00	พัก (1 ชั่วโมง) <b>1 hour break</b>
13.00 - 14.45	ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม 6 คน นำเสนอแผนธุรกิจ และงานออกแบบของตนเอง (Business Canvas / Design Concept / Sketch Design) <b>6 incubatees present their business plan and the design concept</b>
14.45 - 15.00	พัก (15 นาที) <b>15 min break</b>
15.00 - 17.00	ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม 6 คน นำเสนอแผนธุรกิจ และงานออกแบบของตนเอง (Business Canvas / Design Concept / Sketch Design) <b>6 incubatees present their business plan and the design concept</b>

เสาร์ที่ 27 : คิดก่อนทำ Saturday 27 : Think before you do it

09.30 - 10.00	ลงทะเบียน Register
10.00 - 12.00	แนะนำการนำเสนอออกแบบให้น่าสนใจ <b>Guide on an interesting design</b>
12.00 - 13.00	พัก (1 ชั่วโมง) <b>1 hour break</b>
13.00 - 14.45	ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม 6 คน นำเสนอแผนธุรกิจ และงานออกแบบของตนเอง (Business Canvas / Design Concept / Sketch Design) <b>6 incubatees present their business plan and the design concept</b>
14.45 - 15.00	พัก (15 นาที) <b>15 min break</b>
15.00 - 17.00	ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม 6 คน นำเสนอแผนธุรกิจ และงานออกแบบของตนเอง (Business Canvas / Design Concept / Sketch Design) <b>6 incubatees present their business plan and the design concept</b>

อาทิตย์ที่ 28 : คิดแล้วลองทำ Sunday 28 : Think and try it

09.30 - 10.00	ลงทะเบียน Register
10.00 - 12.00	แนะนำเทคโนโลยีการขาย และการจัดแสดงสินค้า / วิทยากรรับเชิญ <b>Guest speaker: Selling technique and product display</b>
12.00 - 13.00	พัก (1 ชั่วโมง) <b>1 hour break</b>
13.00 - 14.45	แนะนำการออกแบบรายบุคคล (Design Consult 1)
14.45 - 15.00	พัก (15 นาที) <b>15 min break</b>
15.00 - 17.00	แนะนำการออกแบบรายบุคคล (Design Consult 1)

บรรยาย(Lecture)

กิจกรรม(Workshop)

ลงพื้นที่(Field Trip)

\*หมายเหตุ : ตารางกิจกรรมอาจมีการเปลี่ยนแปลงหรือปรับปรุงในภายหลัง

### 3rd | 24-26 May 2019 | Reflection

ครั้งที่ 3 | 24-26 พฤษภาคม 2562 | Reflection

\*การนำเสนอ ก่อนเริ่มกิจกรรมในเดือนนี้

: แนวทางการพัฒนาผลิตภัณฑ์ของตนเองที่ต่อยอดจากเดือนที่แล้ว (Design Develop)

\*Assignment

: Present your progress on product development from last month

#### ศุกร์ที่ 24 : คิดแล้วทำได้ 1 Friday 24 : I think, I did it 1

09.30 - 10.00	ลงทะเบียน Register
10.00 - 12.00	<b>Design Case Study: Develop your idea into a retail product</b> Design Case Study : การพัฒนาความคิดไปสู่ผลิตภัณฑ์ขายได้จริง
12.00 - 13.00	พัก (1 ชั่วโมง) <b>1 hour break</b>
13.00 - 14.45	<b>Incubatees present their progress on product development from last month</b> ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม นำเสนอแบบพัฒนาของตนเองที่ต่อยอดจากเดือนที่แล้ว (Design Develop)
14.45 - 15.00	พัก (15 นาที) <b>15 min break</b>
15.00 - 17.00	<b>Incubatees present their progress on product development from last month</b> ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม นำเสนอแบบพัฒนาของตนเองที่ต่อยอดจากเดือนที่แล้ว (Design Develop)

#### เสาร์ที่ 25 : คิดแล้วทำได้ 2 Saturday 25 : I think, I did it 2

09.30 - 10.00	ลงทะเบียน Register
10.00 - 12.00	<b>Design Case Study: What does it take to become a good brand?</b> Design Case Study : วิเคราะห์ปั้นแบรนด์ดีๆ ด้วยสกุลเงินดิจิทัล
12.00 - 13.00	พัก (1 ชั่วโมง) <b>1 hour break</b>
13.00 - 14.45	<b>Incubatees present their progress on product development from last month</b> ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม นำเสนอแบบพัฒนาของตนเองที่ต่อยอดจากเดือนที่แล้ว (Design Develop)
14.45 - 15.00	พัก (15 นาที) <b>15 min break</b>
15.00 - 17.00	<b>Incubatees present their progress on product development from last month</b> ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม นำเสนอแบบพัฒนาของตนเองที่ต่อยอดจากเดือนที่แล้ว (Design Develop)

#### อาทิตย์ที่ 26 : ต่อยอดความคิด Sunday 26 : Further your idea

09.30 - 10.00	ลงทะเบียน Register
10.00 - 12.00	<b>Incubatees present their progress on product development from last month</b> ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม นำเสนอแบบพัฒนาของตนเองที่ต่อยอดจากเดือนที่แล้ว (Design Develop)
12.00 - 13.00	พัก (1 ชั่วโมง) <b>1 hour break</b>
13.00 - 14.45	<b>Guest speaker : From Rubber Killer</b> วิทยากรรับเชิญ : สมเจริญ วงศ์สวัสดิ์ (Rubber Killer)
14.45 - 15.00	พัก (15 นาที) <b>15 min break</b>
15.00 - 17.00	<b>Guest speaker : From Rubber Killer</b> วิทยากรรับเชิญ : สมเจริญ วงศ์สวัสดิ์ (Rubber Killer)

บรรยาย(Lecture)

กิจกรรม(Workshop)

\*หมายเหตุ : ตารางกิจกรรมอาจมีการเปลี่ยนแปลงหรือปรับปรุงในภายหลัง

## 4th | 28-30 June 2019 | Evaluation

ครั้งที่ 4 | 28-30 มิถุนายน 2562 | Evaluation

### \*Assignment

\*การบ้านก่อนเริ่มกิจกรรมในเดือนนี้ Prepare your product from the prototype piece to the current one to organize mini exhibition : ให้ทุกคนเตรียมตัวนำผลิตภัณฑ์ของแต่ละคนที่วิทยากรเคย Comment ไปทั้งหมดตั้งแต่เริ่มกิจกรรม มาในวันเสาร์ที่ 29 รวมทั้งผลิตภัณฑ์ที่เก่าของตัวเองด้วย เพื่อนำมาช่วยกันจัดวางเป็นนิทรรศการขนาดย่อมเพื่อสำหรับนำเสนอผลงาน

รูปแบบกิจกรรมเดือนนี้ แบ่งเป็น 2 ส่วน 3 วัน The format of this month will be separate into 2 section in 3 days

ส่วนที่ 1 Talk Session : วันศุกร์ที่ 28 ช่วงบ่ายมี Speaker รับเชิญ Part 1 Talk Session : On 28th afternoon guest speaker

ส่วนที่ 2 Presentaion : แบ่งออกเป็น 2 วัน Part 2 Presentation: Separate into two days

วันแรกวันเสาร์ที่ 29 ผู้เข้าร่วมโครงการนำเสนอผลงานกับวิทยากรของโครงการ On 29th incubatees present for the program lecturer

วันที่สองวันอาทิตย์ที่ 30 ผู้เข้าร่วมโครงการนำเสนอผลงานกับวิทยากรรับเชิญ

On 30th incubatees present for the guest lecturer

ศุกร์ที่ 28

09.30 - 10.00	ลงทะเบียน Register
10.00 - 12.00	<b>Discussion between incubatees and lecturer on the overall incubation workshop</b> Discussion : ผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรมกับวิทยากรผู้ดูแลเบลยอน ภาพร หงษ์หมา
12.00 - 13.00	พัก (1 ชั่วโมง) <b>1 hour break</b>
13.00 - 14.45	<b>Talk session: Guest speaker Aj. Anusorn Tipayanon</b> Talk Session : ผู้บรรยายรับเชิญ อ.ตัน อนุสรณ์ ติปยานนท์
14.45 - 15.00	พัก (15 นาที) <b>15 min break</b>
15.00 - 17.00	<b>Talk session: Guest speaker Aj. Anusorn Tipayanon</b> Talk Session : ผู้บรรยายรับเชิญ อ.ตัน อนุสรณ์ ติปยานนท์

เสาร์ที่ 29

09.30 - 10.00	ลงทะเบียน Register
10.00 - 11.00	<b>Display set-up: Setting up product for the miniexhibition</b> Display Set-up : จัดแสดงผลภัณฑ์เพื่อเตรียมตัวนำเสนอผลงาน
11.00 - 12.00	<b>Presentation 1: Incubatees present their progress to the program lecturer</b> Presentation 1 : ผู้เข้าร่วมโครงการนำเสนอผลงานกับวิทยากรในโครงการ (พดຍ พທອ พອມ พອບ)
12.00 - 13.00	พัก (1 ชั่วโมง) <b>1 hour break</b>
13.00 - 14.45	<b>Presentation 1: Incubatees present their progress to the program lecturer</b> Presentation 1 : ผู้เข้าร่วมโครงการนำเสนอผลงานกับวิทยากรในโครงการ (พดຍ พທອ พອມ พອບ)
14.45 - 15.00	พัก (15 นาที) <b>15 min break</b>
15.00 - 17.00	<b>Presentation 1: Incubatees present their progress to the program lecturer</b> Presentation 1 : ผู้เข้าร่วมโครงการนำเสนอผลงานกับวิทยากรในโครงการ (พดຍ พທອ พອມ พອບ)

อาทิตย์ 30

09.30 - 10.00	ลงทะเบียน Register
10.00 - 12.00	<b>Presentation 2: Incubatees present their progress to the guest lecturer</b> Presentation 2 : ผู้เข้าร่วมโครงการนำเสนอผลงานกับวิทยากรรับเชิญในโครงการ
12.00 - 13.00	พัก (1 ชั่วโมง) <b>1 hour break</b>
13.00 - 14.45	<b>Presentation 2: Incubatees present their progress to the guest lecturer</b> Presentation 2 : ผู้เข้าร่วมโครงการนำเสนอผลงานกับวิทยากรรับเชิญในโครงการ
14.45 - 15.00	พัก (15 นาที) <b>15 min break</b>
15.00 - 17.00	<b>Presentation 2: Incubatees present their progress to the guest lecturer</b> Presentation 2 : ผู้เข้าร่วมโครงการนำเสนอผลงานกับวิทยากรรับเชิญในโครงการ
17.00 - 17.15	<b>สรุปผลโครงการ Conclude the workshop</b>

บรรยาย(Lecture)

กิจกรรม(Workshop)

\*หมายเหตุ : ตารางกิจกรรมอาจมีการเปลี่ยนแปลงหรือปรับปรุงในภายหลัง

## Appendix E

### Interview questions

#### Interview question for incubatees

(Translated version of the interview question)

Name of the company:

Name and role of the interviewee:

Interview date:

Contact information:

1. General information of the company (establish since, size, business sector, business model, how did you start this business)
2. What is your experience with TCDC?  
What did you like and did not like about this institution?
3. How many times have you ever participated in TCDC incubation workshop?
4. How did you know about TCDC incubation workshop?
5. What did you get from incubate with TCDC? (Base on the three-value proposition)
  - a. Access to business mentor? (soft measure)
  - b. Access to funding? / TCDC network? (soft measure)
  - c. Access to TCDC infrastructure / resources such as meeting room, Resource enter, Maker Space, Material & Design Innovation Center
6. What are your tangible outputs/ hard measure from the incubation workshop? (a new products or services, prototype, profit)
7. Is there any the long-term impact that you got from incubated with TCDC?
8. Is there any change in your product or services after the incubation workshop?
9. What do you think about creative economy?

# The role of the Creative Business Incubator in the Creative Economy: the case of Thailand Creative & Design Center Between 2018 to 2019

## Abstract

Surviving in the first few years will always be challenging for new firms, as lacking know-how during the startup phase often leads to business failure. Thus, a business incubator could be the solution and the needed shortcut to help entrepreneurs excel, stimulate new business creation and sustain business growth. Since the early 1980s, the economic development of Thailand has been based on export-oriented, resource-based and labor-intensive industries. As a consequence foreign investors were able to benefit from the low cost in labor-intensive production and were incentivized to invest in Thailand. However, this competitive advantage was not everlasting for Thailand as a player in the global economy. To maintain the country's competitive position in the global market in the mid-2000s, Thailand adopted the idea of the creative economy and moved towards a 'Value Creation Economy.' In 2005, Thailand founded its first creative business incubator called 'Thailand Creative & Design Center' (TCDC). The TCDC positioned itself as a learning center, inspiring and supporting its incubatees to create value-added products and services, with the end goal of increasing the country's competitiveness.

Meanwhile, this raised the question of how can a creative business incubator become a tool to support the growth of the creative economy in Thailand? Since the connection between infrastructure and community cannot happen out of thin air it is also necessary to explore the role of creative business incubators in supporting the creative economy, as in the case of the TCDC between 2018 to 2019. This thesis will apply the 'anatomy of the creative city' framework to evaluate the role of TCDC in fostering the synergy between different sectors in the creative economy, and the 'three values propositions of a business incubator' to identify the role of TCDC as the business incubator. This study examined multiple case studies from the incubatees that have participated in the TCDC incubation project within the past two years. From the study, it has been found that the establishment of the TCDC has helped create a fertile soil for creativity to take place in Bangkok. The role of this creative business incubator in the creative economy was to help fill the *middleground* gap, the missing gap between the *underground* (talented individuals, startup companies, or creatives) and to the *upperground* institution (government institutions, banks, or big businesses).

- **Keywords:** Business Incubation, Creative Industries, Creative Business Incubator, Creative Incubator, Creative Economy, Creative Industries and Developing Countries, Thailand Creative Economy, Thailand Economic Development, Evaluation of Incubator, Thailand Creative and Design Center